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THE YALE
SHAKESPEARE

EDITED BY
JACK R. CRAWFORD

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THE YALE SHAKESPEARE

EDITED BY

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WILLARD HIGLEY DURHAM

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The Yale Shakespeare

THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET
PRINCE OF DENMARK

Shakespeare, William

EDITED BY
JACK RANDALL CRAWFORD



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The facsimile opposite represents the title-page of the Elizabethan Club copy of the Second Quarto (1604). Only three copies of this edition are known to survive.

T H E
Tragicall Historie of
H A M L E T,
Prince of Denmarke.

By William Shakespeare.

Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much
again as it was, according to the true and perfect
Coppie.



AT LONDON,
Printed by I. R. for N. L. and are to be sold at his
shoppe vnder Saint Dunstons Church in
Fleetstreet. 1604.

[DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CLAUDIUS, *King of Denmark*

HAMLET, *Son to the late, and Nephew to the present King*

FORTINBRAS, *Prince of Norway*

HORATIO, *Friend to Hamlet*

POLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain*

LAERTES, *his Son*

VOLTIMAND,

CORNELIUS,

ROSENCRANTZ,

GUILDENSTERN,

OSRIC,

A Gentleman,

A Priest

MARCELLUS, } *Officers*

BERNARDO, }

FRANCISCO, *a Soldier*

REYNALDO, *Servant to Polonius*

A Captain

English Ambassadors

Players. Two Clowns, *Grave-diggers*

GERTRUDE, *Queen of Denmark and Mother to Hamlet*

OPHELIA, *Daughter to Polonius*

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailor, Messenger,
and Attendants

Ghost of Hamlet's Father

SCENE: *Denmark.*]

Dramatis Personæ; cf. n.

Hamlet—Prince of Denmark

ACT FIRST

Scene One

[*Elsinore. A Platform of the Castle*]

Enter Bernardo and Francisco, two Sentinels.

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me; stand, and unfold yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo? 4

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed,
Francisco.

Fran. For this relief much thanks; 'tis bitter cold, 8
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good-night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus, 12
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who's
there?

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good-night.

Mar. O! farewell, honest soldier: 16

S. d. Platform: level space on castle ramparts

3 Long . . . king!; cf. n.

15 Friends . . . Dane; cf. n.

13 rivals: partners

16 Give you: God-give you

Who hath reliev'd you?

Fran. Bernardo has my place.

Give you good-night. *Exit Francisco.*

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say,

What! is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus. 20

Mar. What! has this thing appear'd again to-night?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him 24

Touching this dreaded sight twice seen of us:

Therefore I have entreated him along

With us to watch the minutes of this night;

That if again this apparition come, 28

He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

Hor. Tush, tush! 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile,

And let us once again assail your ears,

That are so fortified against our story, 32

What we two nights have seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,

And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,

When yond same star that's westward from the pole 36

Had made his course to illume that part of heaven

Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,

The bell then beating one,— *Enter the Ghost.*

Mar. Peace! break thee off; look, where it comes
again! 40

19 piece; *cf. n.*

29 approve: *confirm*

23 fantasy: *imagination*

37 his; *cf. n.*

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder. 44

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and war-like form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark 48
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee,
speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!

Exit the Ghost.

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer. 52

Ber. How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you on 't?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe 56
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on 60
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange. 64

42 scholar; cf. n.

45 It . . . to; cf. n.

57 sensible: *involving the use of one of the senses* avouch: *assurance*

62 parle: *parley*

43 mark: *observe closely*

49 sometimes: *formerly*

63 sledded Polacks: *Poles on sledges (?)*; cf. n.

Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work I know not;

But in the gross and scope of my opinion, 68
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,

Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land; 72

And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;

Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week; 76

What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day:

Who is 't that can inform me?

Hor. That can I;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king, 80
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,

Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,

Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet— 84
For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—

Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,

Did forfeit with his life all those his lands 88
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror;

65 jump: *just*

68 gross and scope: *general drift*

72 toils: *causes to toil*

73 cast: *founding*

75 impress: *enforced service*

83 prick'd on: *incited*

87 law and heraldry; *cf. n.*

67 thought: *train of thinking*

70 Good now; *cf. n.*

subject: *people, subjects*

74 mart: *traffic, buying and selling*

77 toward: *in preparation*

emulate: *ambitious*

89 seiz'd of: *possessed of*

Against the which, a moiety competent
 Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
 To the inheritance of Fortinbras, 92
 Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant,
 And carriage of the article design'd,
 His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
 Of unimproved mettle hot and full, 96
 Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
 Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,
 For food and diet, to some enterprise
 That hath a stomach in 't; which is no other—
 As it doth well appear unto our state— 101
 But to recover of us, by strong hand
 And terms compulsative, those foresaid lands
 So by his father lost. And this, I take it, 104
 Is the main motive of our preparations,
 The source of this our watch and the chief head
 Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

[*Ber.* I think it be no other but e'en so; 108
 Well may it sort that this portentous figure
 Comes armed through our watch, so like the king
 That was and is the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye. 112
 In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
 The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets; 116

90 moiety competent: <i>equal amount</i>	91 gaged: <i>staked</i>
94 carriage: <i>import</i> design'd: <i>drawn up</i>	
96 unimproved: <i>unproved (?)</i> ; cf. <i>n.</i> <i>ardent</i>	hot and full: <i>exceedingly</i>
97 skirts: <i>outskirts</i>	
98 Shark'd up: <i>picked up at haphazard</i> <i>desperadoes</i>	list; cf. <i>n.</i> resolute:
99 For . . . diet; cf. <i>n.</i>	100 stomach; cf. <i>n.</i>
103 compulsative: <i>involving compulsion</i>	106 head: <i>origin</i>
107 romage: <i>commotion, bustle</i>	109 sort: <i>fit</i>
112 mote: <i>minute particle of dust</i>	
113 palmy state: <i>flourishing sovereignty</i>	

As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
 Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
 Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse; 120
 And even the like precurse of fierce events,
 As harbingers preceding still the fates
 And prologue to the omen coming on,
 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
 Unto our climatures and countrymen.] 125

Enter Ghost again.

But, soft! behold! lo! where it comes again.
 I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion!
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice, 128
It spreads his arms.

Speak to me:
 If there be any good thing to be done,
 That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
 Speak to me: 132
 If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
 Which happily foreknowing may avoid,
 O! speak;
 Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life 136
 Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
 For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
The cock crows.

Speak of it: stay, and speak! Stop it, Marcellus. 139

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber. 'Tis here!

Hor. 'Tis here!

117 As . . . blood; *cf. n.*

118 Disasters: *unfavorable aspects; cf. n.*

120 sick . . . doomsday; *cf. n.*

122 still: *constantly*

125 climatures: *regions (?) ; cf. n.*

131 [do] grace: *do honor to*

136 uphoarded; *cf. n.*

moist star: *moon*

121 precurse: *heralding*

123 prologue: *introduction*

127 cross: *meet, face; cf. n.*

134 happily: *haply*

140 partisan; *cf. n.*

Exit Ghost.

Mar. 'Tis gone!

We do it wrong, being so majestic,
 To offer it the show of violence; 144
 For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
 And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
 Upon a fearful summons. I have heard, 149
 The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
 Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
 Awake the god of day; and at his warning, 152
 Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
 The extravagant and erring spirit hies
 To his confine; and of the truth herein
 This present object made probation. 156

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
 Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
 Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 The bird of dawning singeth all night long; 160
 And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad;
 The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
 No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
 So hallow'd and so gracious is the time. 164

Hor. So have I heard and do in part believe it.
 But, look, the morn in russet mantle clad,
 Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill;
 Break we our watch up; and by my advice 168
 Let us impart what we have seen to-night
 Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
 This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

150 cock; *cf. n.*

154 extravagant: *vagrant* erring: *wandering* hies: *hastens*

155 confine: *place of confinement*

158 'gainst that: *by the time that*

163 takes: *bewitches*

156 probation: *proof*

162 planets strike; *cf. n.*

164 gracious: *instinct with goodness*

Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty? 173

Mar. Let's do 't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently. *Exeunt.*

Scene Two

[*A Room of State in the Castle*]

Enter Claudius, King of Denmark, Gertrude the Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes and his sister, Ophelia, [and] Lords attendant.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's
death

The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe, 4
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress of this war-like state, 9
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,
With one auspicious and one dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage, 12
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone 16
With this affair along: for all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death

4 brow of woe: *aspect of woe* 9 jointress: *joint possessor*, or, *dowager*
10 defeated: *disfigured* 11 auspicious: *happy* dropping: *tearful*
13 dole: *grief* 18 weak supposal: *low opinion*

Our state to be disjoint and out of frame, 20
 Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
 Importing the surrender of those lands
 Lost by his father, with all bands of law, 24
 To our most valiant brother. So much for him.

Enter Voltimand and Cornelius.

Now for ourself and for this time of meeting.
 Thus much the business is: we have here writ
 To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, 28
 Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
 Of this his nephew's purpose, to suppress
 His further gait herein; in that the levies,
 The lists and full proportions, are all made 32
 Out of his subject; and we here dispatch
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway,
 Giving to you no further personal power 36
 To business with the king more than the scope
 Of these delated articles allow.

Farewell and let your haste commend your duty.

[Cor.] } In that and all things will we show our
 Vol. } duty. 40

King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.

Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
 You told us of some suit; what is't, Laertes?
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane, 44
 And lose your voice; what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
 That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?

20 disjoint: *at loose ends* frame: *order*
 21 Colleagued: *allied* dream of his advantage: *imaginary superiority*
 23 Importing: *bearing as its purport* 24 bands: *agreements*
 31 gait: *proceeding* 32 proportions: *supplies, forces*
 38 delated: *expressly stated* 44 the Dane: *the king of Denmark*
 45 lose your voice: *speak to no purpose*

The head is not more native to the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth, 48
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laer. Dread my lord,
 Your leave and favour to return to France;
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark, 52
 To show my duty in your coronation,
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon. 56

King. Have you your father's leave? What says
 Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, [wrung from me my slow
 leave

By laboursome petition, and at last
 Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:] 60
 I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
 And thy best graces spend it at thy will.
 But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,— 64

Ham. [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less
 than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour
 off, 68

And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
 Do not for ever with thy veiled lids
 Seek for thy noble father in the dust:

47 native: *closely and congenitally connected*

48 instrumental: *serviceable* 50 Dread my lord: *my dread lord*

51 leave and favour: *kind permission*

56 leave and pardon: *indulgence [to depart]*

60 hard: *given with difficulty*

65 kin . . . kind; *cf. n.* 67 i' the sun; *cf. n.* 63 graces: *virtues*

70 veiled: *down-cast*

Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die, 72
 Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen.

If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! Nay, it is; I know not
 'seems.' 76

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
 Nor customary suits of solemn black,
 Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
 No, nor the fruitful river in the eye, 80
 Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
 Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief,
 That can denote me truly; these indeed seem,
 For they are actions that a man might play: 84
 But I have that within which passeth show;
 These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,
 Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father: 88
 But, you must know, your father lost a father;
 That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound
 In filial obligation for some term

To do obsequious sorrow; but to persever 92
 In obstinate condolement is a course

Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:
 It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,
 A heart unfortified, a mind impatient, 96

An understanding simple and unschool'd:
 For what we know must be and is as common
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,

72 common: *the common lot*

79 windy suspiration: *tempestuous sighing*

80 fruitful: *copious*

92 obsequious: *dutiful*

99 vulgar thing: *common experience*

75 particular: *personal*

forc'd: *against one's will*

83 denote: *portray*

93 condolement: *sorrowing*

Why should we in our peevish opposition 100
 Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
 To reason most absurd, whose common theme
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried, 104
 From the first corse till he that died to-day,
 'This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth
 This unprevailing woe, and think of us
 As of a father; for let the world take note, 108
 You are the most immediate to our throne;
 And with no less nobility of love
 Than that which dearest father bears his son
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent 112
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,
 It is most retrograde to our desire;
 And we beseech you, bend you to remain
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye, 116
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
Hamlet:

I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:
 Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come;
 This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
 Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof, 124
 No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
 And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
 Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away. 128

Exeunt [all except Hamlet.]

105 corse: *corpse*

107 unprevailing: *unavailing*

109 immediate: *next in succession*

112 impart: *bestow*

113 Wittenberg; *cf. n.*

114 retrograde: *contrary*

115 bend: *incline*

127 rouse: *bumper* bruit: *echo*

Ham. O! that this too too solid flesh would melt,
 Thaw and resolve itself into a dew;
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God! 132
 How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
 Seem to me all the uses of this world.
 Fie on 't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
 That grows to seed; things rank and gross in
 nature 136
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
 But two months dead: nay, not so much, not two:
 So excellent a king; that was, to this,
 Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother 140
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
 Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
 As if increase of appetite had grown 144
 By what it fed on; and yet, within a month,
 Let me not think on 't: Frailty, thy name is woman! ✓
 A little month; or ere those shoes were old
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears; why she, even she,— 149
 O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
 Would have mourn'd longer,—married with mine
 uncle,
 My father's brother, but no more like my father
 Than I to Hercules: within a month, 153
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
 She married. O! most wicked speed, to post
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets. 157

130 resolve: *dissolve*

137 merely: *entirely*

149 Niobe; *cf. n.*

155 flushing: *redness*

156 post: *hasten*

132 canon: *law*

140 Hyperion; *cf. n.*

141 beteem: *allow*

150 discourse of reason: *reasoning power*

galled: *sore with weeping*

157 dexterity: *facility*

It is not nor it cannot come to good;
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

Enter Horatio, Bernardo, and Marcellus.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well. 160

Horatio, or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant
ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name
with you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?

Marcellus? 165

Mar. My good lord,—

Ham. I am very glad to see you. [*To Bernardo.*]

Good even, sir.

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord. 169

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so,

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,

To make it truster of your own report 172

Against yourself; I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's
funeral. 176

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd
meats 180

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

161 forget myself; *cf. n.*

169 disposition: *temperament, mood*

180 bak'd meats: *meat pies; cf. n.*

182 dearest: *direst*

Ere I had ever seen that day, Horatio!
 My father, methinks I see my father. 184

Hor. O! where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

✓ *Ham.* He was a man, take him for all in all,
 I shall not look upon his like again. 188

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw? Who?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king, my father?

Hor. Season your admiration for a while 192

With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
 Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
 This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen, 196
 Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
 In the dead vast and middle of the night,
 Been thus encounter'd: a figure like your father,
 Arm'd at all points exactly, cap-a-pe, 200
 Appears before them, and with solemn march
 Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd
 By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
 Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, dis-
 till'd 204

Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
 Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
 In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
 And I with them the third night kept the watch;
 Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time, 209

192 Season: *temper, qualify*

193 attent: *attentive*

200 cap-a-pe: *from head to foot*

204 truncheon: *officer's staff*

admiration: *wonder, astonishment*

198 vast: *waste; cf. n.*

distill'd: *melted*

205 act: *operation*

Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes. I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we
watch'd. 213

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My lord, I did;

But answer made it none; yet once methought
It lifted up its head and did address 216
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away
And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange. 220

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me. 224
Hold you the watch to-night?

Mar. }
Ber. } We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

Mar. }
Ber. } Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

Mar. }
Ber. } My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face? 228

Hor. O yes! my lord; he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What! look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale or red? 232

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long? 236

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar. }
Ber. } Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw it.

Ham. His beard was grizzled, no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life, 240
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night;
Perchance 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape 244

And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night, 248

Give it an understanding, but no tongue:
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well.
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour. 252

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

Exeunt [all but Hamlet].

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would the night were come!

237 tell: *count*

241 sable: *heraldic term for black* 247 tenable: *that which may be kept*

239 grizzled: *grey*

Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise, 256
 Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.
Exit.

Scene Three

[*Polonius' Apartment in the Castle*]

Enter Laertes and Ophelia.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd; farewell:
 And, sister, as the winds give benefit
 And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
 But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that? 4

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
 Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
 A violet in the youth of primy nature,
 Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting, 8
 The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
 No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:

For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
 In thews and bulk; but, as this temple waxes, 12
 The inward service of the mind and soul
 Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,
 And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
 The virtue of his will; but you must fear, 16
 His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own,
 For he himself is subject to his birth;
 He may not, as unvalu'd persons do,

2 give benefit: *are favorable* 3 convoy: *means of conveyance*
 6 fashion: *mere form* toy in blood: *passing amorous fancy*
 7 violet; *cf. n.* primy: *early* 8 Forward: *precocious*
 9 suppliance: *diversion* 11 crescent: *growing*
 12 thews: *bodily strength* temple: *body* 14 withal: *also*
 15 soil: *blemish* cautel: *trickery*
 16 virtue of his will: *his virtuous intentions* 19 unvalu'd: *of low rank*

Carve for himself, for on his choice depends 20
The safety and the health of the whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves
you, 24

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
As he in his [particular act and place]
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal. 28
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd importunity. 32

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.

The chariest maid is prodigal enough 36
If she unmask her beauty to the moon;
Virtue herself 'scapes not calumnious strokes;

The canker galls the infants of the spring
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd, 40
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.

Be wary then; best safety lies in fear:
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near. 44

Oph. I shall th' effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,

23 voice and yielding: *approval and compliance*
26 place: *position as a prince; cf. n.* 27 deed: *effect*
30 credent: *trustful* list: *listen to*
32 unmaster'd: *unrestrained* 36 chariest: *most scrupulous*
39 canker: *'worm' that destroys leaves and buds, particularly the rose*
galls: *injures* infants: *young plants*
40 buttons: *buds* disclos'd: *opened*
41 liquid dew: *while the dew is still fresh* 42 blastments: *blights*
47 ungracious: *graceless*

Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine, 49
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede.

Laer.

O! fear me not.

Enter Polonius.

I stay too long; but here my father comes. 52
A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail, 56
And you are stay'd for. There, my blessing with
thee!

And these few precepts in thy memory
✓ Look thou character. ✓ Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act. 60
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar;
✓ The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment 64
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but, being in,
Bear 't that th' opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice; 68
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man, 72

49 puff'd: bloated from excess

50 primrose path: path of pleasure 51 recks: heeds rede: counsel

53 double; cf. n. 54 Occasion: opportunity 56 wind . . . of; cf. n.

58 precepts; cf. n.

59 character: inscribe

60 unproportion'd: inordinate

61 familiar: friendly

64 dull thy palm: make thy palm less sensitive to true hospitality

65 unfledg'd: immature

69 censure: opinion

71 express'd in fancy: singular in design

And they in France of the best rank and station
 Are most select and generous, chief in that.
 Neither a borrower, nor a lender be;
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend, 76
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
 This above all: to thine own self be true,
 And it must follow, as the night the day,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man. 80
 Farewell; my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you; go, your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
 What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
 And you yourself shall keep the key of it. 86

Laer. Farewell. *Exit Laertes.*

Pol. What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord
 Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:

'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
 Given private time to you; and you yourself 92
 Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.
 If it be so,—as so 'tis put on me,
 And that in way of caution,—I must tell you,
 You do not understand yourself so clearly 96
 As it behoves my daughter and your honour.
 What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
 Of his affection to me. 100

74 Are . . . that; *cf. n.*

77 husbandry: *thrift*

83 tend: *are in waiting*

90 Marry: *an oath derived from the name of Saint Mary*

92 private time: *time in private visits*

94 put on: *impressed on*

99 tenders: *offers; cf. n.*

Pol. Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should
think. 104

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby,
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or,—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Roaming it thus,—you'll tender me a fool. 109

Oph. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it: go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech,
my lord, 113

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul 116

Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,

Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time 120

Be somewhat scanted of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate

Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young, 124

And with a larger tether may he walk

Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,

Do not believe his vows, for they are brokers,

Not of that dye which their investments show,

101 green: *inexperienced*

102 Unsifted: *untried* circumstance: *state of affairs*

107 sterling: *legal currency* Tender: *have a regard for*

115 springes: *snares* woodcocks; *cf. n.*

122 entreatments: *conversations, interviews*

126 in few: *briefly*

127 brokers: *go-betweens, procurers*

128 investments: *vestments, clothes*

But mere implorators of unholy suits, 129
 Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,
 The better to beguile. This is for all:
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure, 133
 As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
 Look to 't, I charge you; come your ways.
Oph. I shall obey, my lord. *Exeunt.*

Scene Four

[*A Platform of the Castle*]

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.

Ham. What hour now?

Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck. 4

Hor. Indeed? I heard it not: then it draws near
 the season

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

*A flourish of trumpets, and two pieces [of
 ordnance] go off.*

What does this mean, my lord?

Ham. The king doth wake to-night and takes his
 rouse, 8

Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
 And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
 The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
 The triumph of his pledge.

129 implorators: *solicitors*

2 eager: *sharp*

9 Keeps wassail: *holds a drinking-bout*
German origin

10 Rhenish: *Rhine wine*

133 slander: *bring reproach upon*

8 wake: *hold a revel by night*
 up-spring: *wild dance of*

12 pledge: *toast*

Hor. Is it a custom? 12

Ham. Ay, marry, is 't:
 But to my mind,—though I am native here
 And to the manner born,—it is a custom
 More honour'd in the breach than the observance. 16
 [This heavy-headed revel east and west
 Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of other nations;
 They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
 Soil our addition; and indeed it takes 20
 From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
 The pith and marrow of our attribute.
 So, oft it chances in particular men,
 That for some vicious mole of nature in them, 24
 As, in their birth,—wherein they are not guilty,
 Since nature cannot choose his origin,—
 By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
 Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
 Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens 29
 The form of plausive manners; that these men,
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's star, 32
 Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,
 As infinite as man may undergo,
 Shall in the general censure take corruption
 From that particular fault: the dram of eale 36
 Doth all the noble substance of a doubt,
 To his own scandal.]

*Enter Ghost.*18 traduc'd and tax'd: *defamed and censured*19 clepe: *call* swinish: *gross*20 Soil our addition: *blemish our good name* 22 attribute: *reputation*24 mole: *blemish* 26 his; *cf. n.* 27 complexion: *natural tendency*28 pales: *palings* 29 o'er-leavens: *makes too light*30 plausive: *pleasing*32 nature's livery: *natural attributes* fortune's star: *the position in which one is placed by fortune*34 undergo: *bear the weight of*36 dram of eale; *cf. n.*

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes.

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
 Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd, 40
 Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
 Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
 Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
 That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
 King, father, royal Dane; O! answer me: 45
 Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
 Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
 Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
 Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd, 49
 Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
 To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
 That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel 52
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
 Making night hideous; and we fools of nature
 So horridly to shake our disposition
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls? 56
 Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

Ghost beckons Hamlet.

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
 As if it some impartment did desire
 To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action 60
 It waves you to a more removed ground:
 But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then, will I follow it.

39 ministers of grace: *messengers of God*

40 spirit of health: *good spirit* goblin: *evil spirit*

43 questionable: *inviting question*

47 canoniz'd: *buried according to the Church's rule* hearsed: *coffined*

48 cerements: *grave-clothes*

49 inurn'd: *interred*

53 glimpses of the moon: *the earth by night*

56 reaches: *capacities*

59 impartment: *communication*

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear? 64
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again; I'll follow it. 68

Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my
lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form, 72
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness? think of it;
[The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain 76
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.]

Ham. It wafts me still. Go on, I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands! 80

Hor. Be rul'd; you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.
Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen, 84
[*Breaking from them.*]

By heaven! I'll make a ghost of him that lets me:
I say, away! Go on, I'll follow thee.

Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him. 88

65 at . . . fee: *at even a trifling value*

69 flood: *sea*

71 beetles: *overhangs threateningly*

73 deprive . . . reason: *dethrone reason from its sovereignty*

75 toys of desperation: *whims involving thoughts of self-destruction*

83 Nemean lion's; *cf. n.* nerve: *sinew, tendon* 85 lets: *hinders*

Hor. Have after. To what issue will this come?

✓*Mar.* Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.

Exeunt.

Scene Five

[*A more remote Part of the Platform*]

Enter Ghost and Hamlet.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak; I'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas! poor ghost. 4

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak; I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What? 8

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid 13
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood, 16
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,

Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
 And each particular hair to stand an end,
 Like quills upon the fretful porpentine: 20

But this eternal blazon must not be
 To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O list!
 If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

Ham. O God! 24

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural
 murder.

Ham. Murder!

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
 But this most foul, strange, and unnatural. 28

Ham. Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as
 swift

As meditation or the thoughts of love,
 May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
 And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
 That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf, 33

Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
 'Tis given out that, sleeping in mine orchard,
 A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark 36

Is by a forged process of my death
 Rankly abus'd; but know, thou noble youth,
 The serpent that did sting thy father's life
 Now wears his crown.

Ham. O my prophetic soul! 40
 My uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,

18 knotted: *neatly arranged* combined: *smoothly combed*
 19 an: *on* 20 porpentine: *porcupine*
 21 eternal blazon: *revelation of eternity; cf. n.*
 25 unnatural: *i.e., for one brother to kill another*
 31 apt: *ready to learn* 32 fat weed; *cf. n.*
 33 Lethe; *cf. n.* wharf: *bank* 35 orchard: *garden*
 37 process: *narrative* 38 abus'd: *deceived* 42 adulterate: *adulterous*

With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—
 O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power 44
 So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust
 The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
 O Hamlet! what a falling-off was there;
 From me, whose love was of that dignity 48
 That it went hand in hand even with the vow
 I made to her in marriage; and to decline
 Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
 To those of mine! 52
 But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
 Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
 So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
 Will sate itself in a celestial bed, 56
 And prey on garbage.
 But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;
 Brief let me be. Sleeping within mine orchard,
 My custom always in the afternoon, 60
 Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
 With juice of cursed hebona in a vial,
 And in the porches of mine ears did pour
 The leperous distilment; whose effect 64
 Holds such an enmity with blood of man
 That swift as quicksilver it courses through
 The natural gates and alleys of the body,
 And with a sudden vigour it doth posset 68
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
 The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
 And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
 Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
 All my smooth body. 73

62 hebona: yew, notorious for its poisonous properties

64 leperous: causing leprosy

67 gates and alleys; cf. n.

71 instant: instantaneous

72 lazar-like: leprous-like

68 posset: curdle

tetter: skin eruption

69 eager: sour

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
 Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd;
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin, 76
 Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd,
 No reckoning made, but sent to my account
 With all my imperfections on my head:
 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible! 80
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury and damned incest.
 But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act, 84
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
 Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near, 89
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire;
 Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. *Exit.*

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! What
 else? 92

And shall I couple hell? O fie! Hold, hold, my
 heart!

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
 But bear me stiffly up! Remember thee!
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
 In this distracted globe. Remember thee! 97
 Yea, from the table of my memory
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,

75 dispatch'd: *bereft*

77 Unhousel'd: *without having received the Holy Communion* disap-
 pointed: *unprepared* unanel'd: *without having received extreme*
unction

78 reckoning: *confession and absolution*

83 luxury: *lasciviousness*

90 uneffectual: *losing its effect*

98 table: *writing-tablet*

80 horrible; *cf. n.*

89 matin: *morning*

97 distracted globe: *confused head*

99 fond: *foolish*

All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
 That youth and observation copied there; 101
 And thy commandment all alone shall live
 Within the book and volume of my brain,
 Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven! 104
 O most pernicious woman!

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
 My tables, my tables,—meet it is I set it down,
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
 At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark: 109

[Writing.]

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
 It is, 'Adieu, adieu! remember me.'

I have sworn 't. 112

Hor. and Mar. (Within.) My lord! my lord!

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Mar. Lord Hamlet!

Hor. Heaven secure him!

Mar. So be it!

Hor. Hillo, ho, ho; my lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Mar. How is 't, my noble lord?

Hor. What news, my lord? 117

Ham. O! wonderful.

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No; you will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven!

Mar. Nor I, my lord. 120

Ham. How say you, then; would heart of man once
 think it?

But you'll be secret?

100 saws: *maxims* pressures: *impressions—as of a seal*

110 word: *watch-word* 115 Hillo, ho, ho: *falconer's hunting call*

116 come, bird, come: *call which falconers use to their hawk in the air*

Hor. }
Mar. } Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark,

But he's an arrant knave. 124

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave,
 To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are i' the right;
 And so, without more circumstance at all,
 I hold it fit that we shake hands and part; 128
 You, as your business and desire shall point you,—
 For every man hath business and desire,
 Such as it is,—and, for mine own poor part,
 Look you, I'll go pray. 132

Hor. These are but wild and hurling words, my lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily;
 Yes, faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is,
 Horatio, 136

And much offence, too. Touching this vision here,
 It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you;
 For your desire to know what is between us,
 O'ermaster 't as you may. And now, good friends, 140
 As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
 Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is 't, my lord? we will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night. 144

124 arrant: *thoroughgoing*

127 without more circumstance: *without further details*

133 hurling: *violent*

136 Saint Patrick; *cf. n.*

138 honest ghost; *cf. n.*

140 O'ermaster 't: *conquer it*

Hor. } My lord, we will not.
Mar. }
Ham. Nay, but swear 't.
Hor. In faith,
 My lord, not I.
Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.
Ham. Upon my sword.
Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.
Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed. 148
Ghost. Swear. *Ghost cries under the stage.*
Ham. Ah, ha, boy! sayst thou so? art thou there,
 true-penny?
 Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—
 Consent to swear.
Hor. Propose the oath, my lord. 152
Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
 Swear by my sword.
Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.
Ham. *Hic et ubique?* then we'll shift our
 ground. 156
 Come hither, gentlemen,
 And lay your hands again upon my sword:
 Never to speak of this that you have heard,
 Swear by my sword. 160
Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.
Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth
 so fast?
 A worthy pioner! once more remove, good friends.
Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous
 strange! 164
Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.

150 true-penny: *honest fellow*

156 *Hic et ubique*: here and everywhere

154 sword; *cf. n.*

163 pioner: *digger, miner*

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come; 168

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on, 172

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or thus, head shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, 'Well, well, we know,' or, 'We could, an if we
would;' 176

Or, 'If we list to speak,' or, 'There be, an if they
might;'

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me: this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,
Swear. 180

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear. [*They swear.*]

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is 184
May do, to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.

The time is out of joint; O cursed spite, 188
That ever I was born to set it right!

Nay, come, let's go together. *Exeunt.*

167 your; *cf. n.* 171 meet: *proper* 172 antic: *fantastic*
174 encumber'd: probably *folded* 175 doubtful: *ambiguous*
177 an if: *an intensive form of if*
178 to note: *to give a sign* 188 spite: *vexatious circumstance*

ACT SECOND

Scene One

[*Polonius' Apartment in the Castle*]

Enter Polonius and Reynaldo.

Pol. Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquiry 4
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said, very well said. Look you, sir,

Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they
keep, 8

What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it: 12
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus, 'I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him;' do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord. 16

Pol. 'And, in part, him; but,' you may say, 'not well:

But if 't be he I mean, he's very wild,
Addicted so and so;' and there put on him

7 Danskers: *Danes*

10 encompassment: 'talking round' a subject

13 Take: *assume*

8 keep: *live*

12 demands: *questions*

19 put on: *impute to*

What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
 As may dishonour him; take heed of that; 21
 But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips
 As are companions noted and most known
 To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord? 24

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrel-
 ling,

Drabbing; you may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. Faith, no; as you may season it in the
 charge. 28

You must not put another scandal on him,
 That he is open to incontinency;
 That's not my meaning; but breathe his faults so
 quaintly

That they may seem the taints of liberty, 32
 The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
 A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
 Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord,—

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord, 36

I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift;

And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:
 You laying these slight sullies on my son,
 As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working, 40
 Mark you,

20 forgeries: *invented tales* rank: *excessive*

22 wanton: *unrestrained*

26 Drabbing: *associating with immoral women*

30 incontinency: *habitual loose behavior* 31 quaintly: *ingeniously*

32 taints of liberty: *blemishes due to freedom*

34 unreclaimed: *untamed*

35 Of general assault: *to which all are liable; cf. n.*

38 fetch of warrant: *justifiable trick* 39 sullies: *blemishes*

Your party in converse, him you would sound,
 Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
 The youth you breathe of guilty, be assur'd, 44
 He closes with you in this consequence;
 'Good sir,' or so; or 'friend,' or 'gentleman,'
 According to the phrase or the addition
 Of man and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord. 48

Pol. And then, sir, does he this,—he does,—
 what was I about to say? By the mass I was
 about to say something: where did I leave?

Rey. At 'closes in the consequence.' 52
 At 'friend or so,' and 'gentleman.'

Pol. At 'closes in the consequence,' ay, marry;
 He closes with you thus: 'I know the gentleman;
 I saw him yesterday, or t' other day, 56
 Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
 There was a' gaming; there o'ertook in 's rouse;
 There falling out at tennis;' or perchance,
 'I saw him enter such a house of sale,' 60

Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.
 See you now;
 Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth;
 And thus do we of wisdom and of reach, 64
 With windlasses, and with assays of bias,
 By indirections find directions out:
 So by my former lecture and advice
 Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

43 prenominate: *aforesaid*
 45 closes: *agrees* consequence: *conclusion*
 51 leave: *leave off* 58 a': *he* o'ertook in 's rouse: *drunk*
 60 house of sale: *house of ill fame*
 61 *Videlicet*: *namely* 64 reach: *ability*
 65 windlasses: *roundabout ways* assays of bias: *indirect attempts*
 66 indirections: *devious courses* directions: *straight courses—i.e.,*
the truth
 67 lecture: *instruction*

Pol. God be wi' you; fare you well. 69

Rey. Good my lord!

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Rey. I shall, my lord. 72

Pol. And let him ply his music.

Rey. Well, my lord.

Pol. Farewell! *Exit Reynaldo.*

Enter Ophelia.

How now, Ophelia! what's the matter?

Oph. Alas! my lord, I have been so affrighted.

Pol. With what, in the name of God? 76

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
 Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd;
 No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
 Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle; 80
 Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
 And with a look so piteous in purport
 As if he had been loosed out of hell
 To speak of horrors, he comes before me. 84

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;
 But truly I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist and held me hard,
 Then goes he to the length of all his arm, 88
 And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
 He falls to such perusal of my face
 As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
 At last, a little shaking of mine arm, 92
 And thrice his head thus waving up and down,

71 inclination in yourself: *character for yourself*

73 ply his music: *go his own gait* 77 closet: *apartment*

78 doublet: *close-fitting coat* unbrac'd: *unfastened*

80 down-gyved: *hanging down like gyves or fetters*

90 perusal: *scrutiny*

He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound
 That it did seem to shatter all his bulk
 And end his being. That done, he lets me go, 96
 And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
 He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
 For out o' doors he went without their help,
 And to the last bended their light on me. 100

Pol. Come, go with me; I will go seek the king.
 This is the very ecstasy of love,
 Whose violent property fordoes itself
 And leads the will to desperate undertakings
 As oft as any passion under heaven 105
 That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.
 What! have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord; but, as you did com-
 mand, 108
 I did repel his letters and denied
 His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
 I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
 I had not quoted him; I fear'd he did but trifle,
 And meant to wrack thee; but, beshrew my
 jealousy! 113

By heaven, it is as proper to our age
 To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions
 As it is common for the younger sort 116
 To lack discretion.) Come, go we to the king:
 This must be known; which, being kept close, might
 move
 More grief to hide than hate to utter love.
 Come.

Exeunt.

95 bulk: *breast*

103 property: *nature* fordoes: *destroys*

113 wrack: *ruin* beshrew: *curse* jealousy: *suspicion, mistrust*

115 cast beyond: *be over subtle*

102 ecstasy: *madness*

112 quoted: *observed*

119 More . . . love; *cf. n.*

Scene Two

[*A Room in the Castle*]*Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern,
with others.**King.* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!

Moreover that we much did long to see you,
 The need we have to use you did provoke
 Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
 Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it, 5
 Since nor the exterior nor the inward man
 Resembles that it was. What it should be
 More than his father's death, that thus hath put him 8
 So much from the understanding of himself,
 I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
 That, being of so young days brought up with him,
 And since so neighbour'd to his youth and humour, 12
 That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
 Some little time; so by your companies
 To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
 So much as from occasion you may glean, 16
 [Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,]
 That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of
you;

And sure I am two men there are not living 20
 To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
 To show us so much gentry and good will
 As to expend your time with us awhile,
 For the supply and profit of our hope, 24

11 of so young days: *from such early youth*12 neighbour'd . . . humour: *near in age and temperament*13 vouchsafe your rest: *please to reside*18 open'd: *revealed*22 gentry: *courtesy* 24 supply and profit: *aid and successful outcome*

Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey, 29
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded. 32

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guilden-
stern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosen-
crantz;
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. Go, some of you, 36
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence, and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, [and some
Attendants.]*

Enter Polonius.

Pol. The ambassadors from Norway, my good
lord, 40
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul, 44
Both to my God, one to my gracious king;
And I do think—or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure

30 in the full bent: to the utmost degree of mental capacity

47 policy: conduct of public affairs

As it hath us'd to do—that I have found 48
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O! speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast. 52

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them
in. [Exit Polonius.]

He tells me, my sweet queen, that he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

King. Well, we shall sift him.

Enter Polonius, Voltimand, and Cornelius.

Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Volt. Most fair return of greetings, and desires. 60

Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found 64

It was against your highness: whereat griev'd,
That so his sickness, age, and impotence
Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys, 68

Receives rebuke from Norway, and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle never more
To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy, 72

Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,
And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack;

52 fruit: *dessert*

56 main: *the chief point*

69 in fine: *in conclusion*

67 borne in hand: *deluded*

71 assay: *trial*

73 fee: *payment*

With an entreaty, herein further shown, 76
 [Giving a paper.]

That it might please you to give quiet pass
 Through your dominions for this enterprise,
 On such regards of safety and allowance
 As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well; 80
 And at our more consider'd time we'll read,
 Answer, and think upon this business:
 Meantime we thank you for your well-took labour.
 Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:
 Most welcome home.

Exeunt Ambassadors.

Pol. This business is well ended. 85
 My liege, and madam, to expostulate
 What majesty should be, what duty is,
 Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
 Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
 Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
 And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
 I will be brief. Your noble son is mad: 92
 Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
 What is 't but to be nothing else but mad?
 But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all. 96
 That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true 'tis pity;
 And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;
 But farewell it, for I will use no art.
 Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains
 That we find out the cause of this effect, 101
 Or rather say, the cause of this defect,

79 regards . . . allowance; cf. n.

86 expostulate: set forth one's views

91 flourishes: embellishments

81 consider'd: fit for considering

90 wit: judgment, understanding

98 figure: figure of speech

For this effect defective comes by cause;
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.

Perpend.

105

I have a daughter, have while she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: now, gather, and surmise.

The Letter.

“To the celestial, and my soul’s idol, the most beauti-
fied Ophelia.—”

109

That’s an ill phrase, a vile phrase; ‘beautified’
is a vile phrase; but you shall hear. Thus:

“In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.—”

112

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.

“Doubt thou the stars are fire;

Doubt that the sun doth move;

116

Doubt truth to be a liar;

But never doubt I love.

O dear Ophelia! I am ill at these numbers:
I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I
love thee best, O most best! believe it. Adieu.

Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst
this machine is to him,

HAMLET.”

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me;
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King.

But how hath she

128

Receiv’d his love?

105 Perpend: *consider* 109 beautified: *beautiful*, or, *accomplished*

112 these: i.e., *these lines*

119 ill at: *unskilled at making* numbers: *verses*

120 reckon: *number metrically, scan*

123 machine: *bodily frame; cf. n.*

126 more above: *moreover*

127 fell out: *occurred*

means: *opportunities of access*

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think, 131

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,—
 As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
 Before my daughter told me,—what might you,
 Or my dear majesty, your queen here, think,
 If I had play'd the desk or table-book, 136
 Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,
 Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
 What might you think? No, I went round to work,
 And my young mistress thus I did bespeak: 140
 'Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;
 This must not be:' and then I precepts gave her,
 That she should lock herself from his resort,
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens. 144
 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
 And he, repulsed,—a short tale to make,—
 Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
 Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness, 148
 Thence to a lightness; and by this declension
 Into the madness wherein now he raves,
 And all we wail for.

King. Do you think 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely. 152

Pol. Hath there been such a time,—I'd fain know that,—

That I have positively said, ' 'Tis so,'
 When it prov'd otherwise?

137 winking: *with eyes shut*, i.e., *allowed my heart to connive*
 139 round: *straightforwardly* 140 bespeak: *address*
 141 out of thy star: *above the position allotted thee by fortune*
 143 watch: *state of sleeplessness*
 144 lightness: *lightheadedness* declension: *decline*

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise:

[*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*]

If circumstances lead me, I will find

Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed

Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know sometimes he walks four hours
together 160

Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him;
Be you and I behind an arras then;

Mark the encounter; if he love her not, 164

And be not from his reason fallen thereon,

Let me be no assistant for a state,

But keep a farm, and carters.

King. We will try it.

Enter Hamlet reading on a book.

Queen. But look, where sadly the poor wretch
comes reading. 168

Pol. Away! I do beseech you, both away.

I'll board him presently.

Exeunt King, Queen, [and Attendants.]

O! give me leave.

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, God a-mercy. 172

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a
man. 177

159 centre: *middle point of the earth*

164 encounter: *manner of behavior*

170 board: *accost* presently: *immediately*

163 arras: *hanging tapestry*

174 fishmonger; *cf. n.*

Pol. Honest, my lord!

Ham. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand. 181

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter? 185

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing; but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to 't. 189

Pol. [*Aside.*] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter: yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger: he is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again. What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words. 196

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean the matter that you read, my lord. 200

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for you yourself, sir,

184 good kissing; *cf. n.*
 197 matter: *substance*
 203 purging: *discharging*
 204 amber . . . gum; *cf. n.*

187 conception; *cf. n.*
 198 Between who?; *cf. n.*
 207 honesty: *decency*

should be old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward. 210

Pol. [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in't. Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave? 214

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' the air. [*Aside.*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you. 222

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord. [*Going.*]

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is. 228

Ros. [*To Polonius.*] God save you, sir!

[*Exit Polonius.*]

Guil. Mine honoured lord!

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both? 234

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

216 pregnant: full of meaning
218 prosperously: successfully
224 withal: with

217 happiness: appropriateness
235 indifferent: ordinary, average

Guil. Happy in that we are not over happy;
on Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe? 238

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in
the middle of her favours? 241

Guil. Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of Fortune? O!
most true; she is a strumpet. What news? 244

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world's
grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near; but your news
is not true. Let me question more in particular:
what have you, my good friends, deserved at the
hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison
hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord! 252

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are
many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark
being one o' the worst. 257

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is
nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes
it so: to me it is a prison. 261

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one;
'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nut-
shell, and count myself a king of infinite space,
were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition,

for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream. 269

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow. 273

Ham. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason. 277

Ros. }
Guil. } We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter; I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion. 285

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord? 292

Ham. Why anything, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have

272 quality: *nature*

275 outstretched: *strutting*

278 wait upon: *accompany*

282 beaten way: *ordinary course*

288 too dear a halfpenny; *cf. n.*

274 beggars bodies; *cf. n.*

276 fay: *faith*

277 reason: *argue*

279 sort: *class*

290 free: *voluntary*

not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you. 297

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no! 305

Ros. [*Aside to Guildenstern.*] What say you?

Ham. Nay, then, I have an eye of you. If you love me, hold not off. 309

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late,—but wherefore I know not,—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and

296 colour: *disguise*

301 consonancy of youth: *being of the same age*

303 better proposer: *more skillful exhorter*

304 even: *straightforward*

308 have an eye of you: *have an eye upon you*

312 prevent: *precede* discovery: *disclosure*

319 brave: *splendid* 320 fretted: *adorned*

300 conjure: *adjure*

324 faculty: *capacity*

moving, how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman neither, though, by your smiling, you seem to say so. 331

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said 'man delights not me?' 335

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service. 340

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for 't. What players are they? 349

Ros. Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways. 354

325 express: *well-modelled*

328 quintessence; *cf. n.*

338 coted: *passed*

344 humorous man: *actor of whimsical characters*

345 clown: *low comedian*

346 tickle o' the sere: *yield easily to any impulse; cf. n.*

348 halt: *limp*

326 apprehension: *understanding*

332 stuff: *matter*

337 lenten: *meagre*

343 foil and target: *sword and shield*

353 residence: *remaining in one place*

Ros. I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ros. No, indeed they are not. 359

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't: these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages,—so they call them,—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither. 368

Ham. What! are they children? who maintains 'em? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players,—as it is most like, if their means are no better,—their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession? 376

Ros. Faith, there has been much to-do on both sides: and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question. 381

355 inhibition: *formal prohibition*

357 estimation: *reputation*

363 eyases: *young hawks*
pitch of the voice; cf. n.

364 tyrannically: *outrageously*

365 berattle: *fill with din* common stages: *public theatres*

367 afraid of goose-quills: *afraid of being satirized*

370 escoted: *maintained*

373 common players: *professional players*

376 succession: *future, or, inheritance*

379 tarre: *incite* 380 argument: *subject-matter, plot*

356 innovation; *cf. n.*

362 aery: *nest; cf. n.*

cry . . . question: *recite at the highest*

371 quality: *profession*

381 cuffs: *blows*

Ham. Is it possible?

Guil. O! there has been much throwing about of brains. 384

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too. 387

Ham. It is not strange; for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. *Flourish for the Players.*

Guil. There are the players. 395

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come then; the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players—which, I tell you, must show fairly outward—should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome; but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord? 404

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen! 408

- 385 carry it away: *carry the day* 386 Hercules and his load; *cf. n.*
 390 mows: *grimaces* 391 ducats: *gold or silver coins*
 392 in little: *in miniature* 'Sblood: *God's blood*
 394 *Flourish*: a trumpet call
 397 appurtenance: *proper accompaniment*
 399 comply: *observe the formalities of courtesy* garb: *manner*
 extent: *showing of kindness*
 407 handsaw: *saw managed with one hand; cf. n.*

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern; and you too; at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts. 411

Ros. Happily he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. You say right, sir; o' Monday morning; 'twas so indeed. 416

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buzz, buzz! 421

Pol. Upon my honour,—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass,—

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene indivisible, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou! 432

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why

“One fair daughter and no more,
The which he loved passing well.” 436

Pol. [*Aside.*] Still on my daughter.

411 swaddling-clouts: *bandages in which newborn children were wrapped*

419 Roscius; *cf. n.* 421 Buzz, buzz: *an exclamation of contempt*

427 scene indivisible; *cf. n.*

428 poem unlimited; *cf. n.* Seneca; *cf. n.*

429 Plautus; *cf. n.* law of writ and the liberty; *cf. n.*

431 Jephthah: *title of an old ballad; cf. n.* 436 passing: *surpassing*

Ham. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well. 440

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

Ham. Why,

“As by lot, God wot.” 444

And then, you know,

“It came to pass, as most like it was.—”

The first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look where my abridgments come.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well: welcome, good friends. O, my old friend! Thy face is valanced since I saw thee last: comest thou to beard me in Denmark? What! my young lady and mistress! By 'r lady, your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at anything we see: we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech. 461

First Play. What speech, my lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above

446 'as most like it was': *as was most probable*

447 row: *stanza, verse, column of print* (?) chanson: *song*

448 abridgments: *means of whiling away the time*

451 valanced: *'curtained,' with a beard*

454 By 'r lady: *By our Lady (The Virgin)*

455 chopine: *a Venetian raised shoe often worn by actors*

456 uncurrent: *not passable as lawful coinage*

457 cracked . . . ring; *cf. n.*

460 straight: *immediately*

once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general: but it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation; but called it an honest method, [as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine.] One speech in it I chiefly loved; 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line: let me see, let me see:—

480

“The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,—”
'Tis not so, it begins with Pyrrhus:—

“The rugged Pyrrhus, he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse, 485
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules; horridly trick'd 488
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their vile murders: roasted in wrath and fire, 492

466 caviare . . . general; cf. n.

468 cried in the top of: *spoke with a louder voice of authority than*

469 digested: *arranged*; cf. n.

470 modesty: *without exaggeration, moderation* cunning: *skill in technique*

471 sallets . . . savoury; cf. n.

475 handsome; cf. n.

477 Æneas' tale to Dido; cf. n.

485 ominous horse; cf. n.

490 impasted: *made into a paste*

473 indict: *convict*

476 fine: *elaborately fashioned*

481 Hyrcanian; cf. n.

488 gules: *red* trick'd: *spotted*

And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
 With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
 Old grandsire Priam seeks."

[So proceed you.]

496

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with
 good accent and good discretion.

First Play. "Anon, he finds him
 Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
 Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls, 500
 Repugnant to command. Unequal match'd,
 Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;
 But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
 The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium, 504
 Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
 Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
 Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for lo! his sword,
 Which was declining on the milky head 508
 Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:
 So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
 And like a neutral to his will and matter,
 Did nothing. 512
 But, as we often see, against some storm,
 A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
 The bold winds speechless and the orb below
 As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder 516
 Doth rend the region; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
 Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work;
 And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
 On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne, 520

493 o'er-sized: *covered with something like size, a kind of glue*

501 Repugnant to: *resisting* 503 fell: *cruel*

504 senseless: *without physical sensation*

510 painted tyrant: *picture of a tyrant in a tapestry*

511 a neutral: *one indifferent* matter: *task*

513 against: *just before*

514 rack: *mass of cloud*

516 anon: *presently*

517 region: *the air*

520 proof eterne: *eternal impenetrability*

With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power; 524
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!"

Pol. This is too long. 528

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your
beard. Prithee, say on: he's for a jig or a
tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. Say on; come to
Hecuba. 532

First Play. "But who, O! who had seen the mobled
queen—"

Ham. "The mobled queen?"—

Pol. That's good; 'mobled queen' is good.

First Play. "Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning
the flames 536

With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up; 540
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pro-
nounc'd:

But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs, 545

524 synod: assembly

525 fellies: the pieces of wood of which the circumference is made

526 nave: hub

530 jig: lively dance, often accompanied by coarse comic verses or dialogue

531 bawdry: indecency

532 Hecuba; cf. n.

533 mobled: muffled; cf. n.

537 bisson rheum: blinding tears (?) clout: piece of cloth

539 o'er-teemed: exhausted by excessive child-bearing

542 pronounc'd: proclaimed

The instant burst of clamour that she made—
 Unless things mortal move them not at all—
 Would have made milch the burning eyes of
 heaven, 548

And passion in the gods.”

Pol. Look! wh'er he has not turned his colour
 and has tears in 's eyes. Prithee, no more. 551

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the
 rest soon. Good my lord, will you see the players
 well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well
 used; for they are the abstracts and brief chroni-
 cles of the time: after your death you were bet-
 ter have a bad epitaph than their ill report while
 you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to
 their desert. 560

Ham. God's bodikins, man, much better; use
 every man after his desert, and who should 'scape
 whipping? Use them after your own honour and
 dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is
 in your bounty. Take them in. 565

Pol. Come, sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play
 to-morrow. *Exit Polonius, [with all the Players
 but the First.]* Dost thou hear me, old friend;
 can you play the Murder of Gonzago? 570

First Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could,
 for a need, study a speech of some dozen or six-
 teen lines, which I would set down and insert
 in 't, could you not?

548 made milch: *made weep*

554 bestowed: *lodged*

561 God's bodikins; *cf. n.*

573 for a need: *in case of necessity*

550 turned . . . colour: *grown pale*

555 abstracts: *summary accounts*

dozen or sixteen lines; *cf. n.*

First Play. Ay, my lord. 576

Ham. Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player. To Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*] My good friends, I'll leave you till night; you are welcome to Elsinore. 581

Ros. Good my lord!

Exeunt [*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' ye! Now I am alone.

O! what a rogue and peasant slave am I: 584

Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit 587

That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba! 592

What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba
That he should weep for her? What would he do
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with
tears, 596

And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears. 600

Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,

584 peasant: *base* 587 conceit: *imagination*
590 function: *action of the body* suiting: *fitting*
591 forms: *bodily expression* 595 cue; cf. n. 597 horrid: *horrible*
598 free: *free from offence, guiltless*
602 muddy-mettled: *dull-spirited* peak: *mope about*
603 John-a-dreams: *dreamy fellow; cf. n.* unpregnant of: *not quickened by*

And can say nothing; no, not for a king, 604
 Upon whose property and most dear life
 A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
 Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
 Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face? 608
 Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
 As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
 Ha!
 Swounds, I should take it, for it cannot be 612
 But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
 To make oppression bitter, or ere this
 I should have fatted all the region kites
 With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!
 Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless vil-
 lain! 617
 O! vengeance!
 Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave
 That I, the son of a dear [father] murder'd, 620
 Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
 Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
 And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
 A scullion! 624
 Fie upon 't! foh! About, my brain! I have heard,
 That guilty creatures sitting at a play
 Have by the very cunning of the scene
 Been struck so to the soul that presently 628
 They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
 For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
 With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players

605 property; *cf. n.*606 defeat: *destruction*612 Swounds: *God's wounds*613 But: *but that* pigeon-liver'd: *meeek; cf. n.*614 make oppression bitter: *make me feel the bitterness of oppression*615 region kites: *kites of the air*617 kindless: *unnatural*623 drab: *street woman*624 scullion: *kitchen servant*625 About, my brain: *bestir yourself, my brain, or, my brain, on another tack*

Play something like the murder of my father 632
Before mine uncle; I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil: and the devil hath power 636
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy—
As he is very potent with such spirits—
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds 640
More relative than this: the play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. *Exit.*

ACT THIRD

Scene One

[*A Room in the Castle*]

*Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz,
Guildenstern, and Lords.*

King. And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy? 4

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof, 8
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

634 tent: *probe* blench: *start aside*

641 relative: *relevant, to the purpose*

1 drift of circumstance: *roundabout method*

2 confusion: *mental agitation*

3 Grating: *harassing*

639 spirits: *mental moods*

7 forward: *ready, disposed*

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition. 12

Ros. Niggard of question, but of our demands
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out that certain players 16
We o'er-raught on the way; of these we told him,
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: they are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order 20
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true;
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content
me 24

To hear him so inclin'd.

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

Exeunt [*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither, 29
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia.

Her father and myself, lawful espials, 32
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge,
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,

12 forcing of his disposition: *with apparent unwillingness*

13 niggard of question: *sparing of conversation*

14 assay: *challenge*

17 o'er-raught: *overtook*

26 edge: *incitement*

29 closely: *privately*

31 Affront: *meet*

32 espials: *spies*

34 frankly: *freely*

If 't be the affliction of his love or no 36
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you.
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope your virtues 40
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[Exit Queen.]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please
you,
We will bestow ourselves. [To Ophelia.] Read on
this book; 44
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,
'Tis too much prov'd, that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er 48
The devil himself.

King. [Aside.] O! 'tis too true;
How smart a lash that speech doth give my con-
science!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it 52
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burden!

Pol. I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my lord.

Exeunt [King and Polonius.]

Enter Hamlet.

40 wildness: *madness*

43 Gracious: *a courteous epithet, here used without a substantive*

45 exercise: *employment*

47 too much proved: *found by too frequent experience*

48 pious action: *i.e., implies that Ophelia's book was a book of devo-
tions*

52 to: *in comparison with*

Ham. To be, or not to be: that is the question: 56
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
 And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
 No more; and, by a sleep to say we end 61
 The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
 That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep; 64
 To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause. There's the respect 68
 That makes calamity of so long life;
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay, 72
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus make
 With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear, 76
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
 But that the dread of something after death,
 The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
 No traveller returns, puzzles the will, 80
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have
 Than fly to others that we know not of?
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;

59 take . . . troubles; *cf. n.*65 rub: *obstacle*67 shuffled off: *sloughed off* mortal coil: *turmoil of mortal life*68 give us pause: *cause us to hesitate* respect: *consideration*72 dispriz'd: *held in contempt*73 office: *people holding official position* spurns: *insults*75 quietus: *release from life*76 bare: *unsheathed, or, small* bodkin: *dagger* fardels: *burdens*79 bourn: *boundary*83 conscience: *sense of right and wrong (?)*, or, *thought of consequences*

And thus the native hue of resolution 84
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action. Soft you now! 88
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught. 96

Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well you
did;

And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind 100

Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind. ✓
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord! 104

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your
honesty should admit no discourse to your
beauty. 109

84 native hue: natural color, or, complexion

85 sicklied o'er: covered with a sickly tint cast: tinge

86 pith and moment: gravity and importance; cf. I. iv. 22

87 regard: consideration currents: courses

89 orisons: prayers

91 for this many a day: all this long time

103 honest: chaste

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once. 117

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived. 123

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father? 135

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool nowhere but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O! help him, you sweet heavens! 140

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this

110 commerce: *intercourse*
 121 inoculate: *engraft*
 126 indifferent: *tolerably*

116 time: *present age*
 122 relish: *taste*
 129 beck: *command*

plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice,
 as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.
 Get thee to a nunnery, go; farewell. Or, if thou
 wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men
 know well enough what monsters you make of
 them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too.
 Farewell. 148

Oph. O heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too,
 well enough; God hath given you one face, and
 you make yourselves another: you jig, you
 amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's crea-
 tures, and make your wantonness your ignorance.
 Go to, I'll no more on 't; it hath made me mad.
 I say, we will have no more marriages; those
 that are married already, all but one, shall live;
 the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

Exit Hamlet.

Oph. O! what a noble mind is here o'erthrown:
 The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,
 sword; 160

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
 The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
 The observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!
 And I, of ladies most deject and wretched, 164
 That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
 Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
 Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
 That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth 168

150 your paintings: i.e., *that women paint their faces*

153 nickname: *travesty*; cf. *n.*

154 make your wantonness your ignorance: i.e., *affect ignorance as a mask for wantonness*

155 on 't: *of it*

161 expectancy: *source of hope*

162 glass: *mirror* mould: *model*

166 sovereign: *supreme*

168 feature: *proportion of the whole body*
 bloom

blown: *blossoming, in its*

Blasted with ecstasy: O! woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Enter King and Polonius.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little, 172
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger; which for to prevent, 176
I have in quick determination

Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply the seas and countries different 180
With variable objects shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on 't?

Pol. It shall do well: but yet do I believe 185
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. My lord, do as you please; 189
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his griefs: let her be round with him; 192
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him, or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so: 196
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

Exeunt.

169 Blasted: *withered* 175 disclose: *hatching* 181 variable: *various*
182 something-settled: *somewhat settled* 183 beating: *pondering*
184 fashion of himself: *his ordinary manner* 194 find: *find out*

Scene Two

[A Hall in the Castle]

Enter Hamlet and two or three of the Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and—as I may say—whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O! it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

17

First Play. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at

2 trippingly: rapidly, but with neat articulation

3 mouth: speak loudly with false emphasis and indistinctness

8 beget: attain temperance: moderation

10 robustious: boisterous periwig-pated: wearing a wig

12 groundlings; cf. n. 13 capable of: able to receive impressions from

14 inexplicable dumb-shows; cf. n.

16 Termagant; cf. n. out-herods Herod; cf. n.

24 from: apart from

the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O! there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. 40

First Play. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

Ham. O! reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered; that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. *Exeunt Players.*

Enter Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

How now, my lord! will the king hear this piece of work? 52

28 pressure: *impressed character, stamp*

29 come tardy off: *inadequately done*

31 which one: *one of whom*

32 allowance: *acknowledgment*

38 journeymen: *laborers not yet masters of their trade*

45 there be of them: *there are some; cf. n.* 47 barren: *barren of wit*

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste. *Exit Polonius.*
Will you two help to hasten them?

Ros. } We will, my lord. 56
Guil. }

Exeunt [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

Ham. What, ho! Horatio!

Enter Horatio.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal. 60

Hor. O! my dear lord,—

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be
flatter'd? 64

No; let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election 69

Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards 72

Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and bless'd are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man 76
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him

59 just: *balanced*

65 candied: *flattering*

67 thrift: *profit*

76 stop: *a hole in wind instruments for controlling the sound*

60 cop'd withal: *came in contact with*

66 pregnant hinges: *easily inclined joints*

69 election: *choice*

74 blood: *passions*

In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
 As I do thee. Something too much of this.
 There is a play to-night before the king; 80
 One scene of it comes near the circumstance
 Which I have told thee of my father's death:
 I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
 Even with the very comment of thy soul 84
 Observe mine uncle; if his occulted guilt
 Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
 And my imaginations are as foul 88
 As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
 And after we will both our judgments join
 In censure of his seeming. 92

Hor. Well, my lord: 92

If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
 And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle:
 Get you a place. 96

*Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz,
 Guildenstern, and other Lords attendant, with his
 Guard carrying torches. Danish March. Sound
 a Flourish.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's
 dish: I eat the air, promise-crammed; you can-
 not feed capons so. 100

King. I have nothing with this answer, Ham-
 let; these words are not mine.

84 very comment: *most intense observation*

86 unkennel: *reveal* 89 Vulcan; *cf. n.*

92 censure: *giving an opinion*

95 be idle: *act mad; cf. n.*

101 have nothing with: *can make nothing of*

85 occulted: *hidden*

stithy: *smithy, or, anvil*

seeming: *appearance*

98 chameleon's dish; *cf. n.*

Ham. No, nor mine now. [*To Polonius.*]
My lord, you played once i' the university, you
say? 105

Pol. That did I, my lord, and was accounted
a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact? 108

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was killed
i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so
capital a calf there. Be the players ready? 112

Ros. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your
patience.

Queen. Come hither, my good Hamlet, sit by
me. 116

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more
attractive.

Pol. [*To the King.*] O ho! do you mark that?

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap? 120

[*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*]

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord. 125

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between
maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my lord? 128

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord. 132

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker. What

109 Julius Cæsar; *cf. n.*
113 stay upon: *wait for*
114 patience: *permission*

110 Capitol; *cf. n.*

111 part: *action*

117 metal: *material*

should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within's two hours. 136

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by 'r lady, he must build churches then, or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is, 'For, O! for, O! the hobby-horse is forgot.' 146

Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters.

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck; lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.

Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my lord?

139 suit of sables: *suit of rich fur*

143 suffer not thinking on: *be forgotten*

144 hobby-horse: *one of the participants in the morris dance; cf. n.*

S. d. Hautboys: *wooden double-reed instruments of high pitch*

S. d. The dumb-show enters; *cf. n.*

S. d. Mutes: *actors without speaking parts*

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief. 149

Oph. Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all. 153

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him; be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means. 157

Oph. You are naught, you are naught. I'll mark the play.

Pro. For us and for our tragedy, 160

Here stooping to your clemency,

We beg your hearing patiently.

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring? 164

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter [two Players as] King and his Queen.

[*P.*] *King.* Full thirty times hath Phæbus' cart gone round 167

Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orb'd ground,

And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen

About the world have times twelve thirties been,

Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands

Unite commutual in most sacred bands. 172

148 miching mallecho: *skulking mischief; cf. n.*

150 imports: *indicates*

158 naught: *wanton*

163 posy: *moito, short verse*

168 wash: *sea* Tellus'; *cf. n.*

172 commutual: *an intensive form of 'mutual'*

153 counsel: *secret*

161 stooping: *bowing*

167 cart: *chariot*

169 borrow'd sheen: *reflected light*

[P.] *Queen.* So many journeys may the sun and
moon

Make us again count o'er ere love be done!

But, woe is me! you are so sick of late, 175

So far from cheer and from your former state,

That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,

Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;

For women's fear and love holds quantity,

In neither aught, or in extremity. 180

Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;

And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so.

[*Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;*

*Where little fears grow great, great love grows
there.]* 184

[P.] *King.* Faith, I must leave thee, love, and
shortly too;

My operant powers their functions leave to do:

And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,

Honour'd, belov'd; and haply one as kind 188

For husband shalt thou—

[P.] *Queen.* O! confound the rest;

Such love must needs be treason in my breast:

In second husband let me be accurst;

None wed the second but who kill'd the first. 192

Ham. [*Aside.*] Wormwood, wormwood.

[P.] *Queen.* The instances that second marriage
move,

Are base respects of thrift, but none of love;

A second time I kill my husband dead, 196

When second husband kisses me in bed.

177 I distrust you: I have misgivings on your account

179 quantity: proportion

180 In . . . extremity: in either no feeling or the very deepest

186 operant: active

194 instances: motives, inducements move: suggest

[P.] King. I do believe you think what now you speak;

But what we do determine oft we break.

Purpose is but the slave to memory, 200

Of violent birth, but poor validity;

Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,

But fall unshaken when they mellow be.

Most necessary 'tis that we forget 204

To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt;

What to ourselves in passion we propose,

The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.

The violence of either grief or joy 208

Their own enactures with themselves destroy;

Where joy most revels grief doth most lament,

Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.

This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange,

That even our loves should with our fortunes
change; 213

For 'tis a question left us yet to prove

Whether love lead fortune or else fortune love.

The great man down, you mark his favourite flies; 216

The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.

And hitherto doth love on fortune tend,

For who not needs shall never lack a friend;

And who in want a hollow friend doth try 220

Directly seasons him his enemy.

But, orderly to end where I begun,

Our wills and fates do so contrary run

That our devices still are overthrown, 224

Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:

So think thou wilt no second husband wed;

But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

[P.] *Queen.* Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven
light! 228

Sport and repose lock from me day and night!

[*To desperation turn my trust and hope!*

An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!]

Each opposite that blanks the face of joy 232

Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!

Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,

If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now! 236

[P.] *King.* 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me
here awhile;

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile

The tedious day with sleep. (Sleeps.)

[P.] *Queen.* Sleep rock thy brain;

And never come mischance between us twain! Exit.

Ham. Madam, how like you this play? 241

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O! but she'll keep her word. 244

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in 't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world. 248

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: but what of that? your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches

229 Sport: *pleasure; cf. n.*

232 opposite: *contrary thing*

242 protest: *vow*

251 image: *representation*

231 anchor's: *anchorite's*

blanks: *blanches, makes pale*

250 Tropically: *figuratively*

252 duke's name; *cf. n.*

us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are
unwring. 257

Enter [Player as] Lucianus.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are a good chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and
your love, if I could see the puppets dallying. 261

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning to take
off my edge. 264

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you must take your husbands.
Begin, murderer; pox, leave thy damnable
faces, and begin. Come; the croaking raven
doth bellow for revenge. 269

Luc. *Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and
time agreeing;*

Confederate season, else no creature seeing;

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magic and dire property, 274

On wholesome life usurp immediately.

(Pours the poison in his ears.)

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for 's
estate. His name's Gonzago; the story is extant,
and writ in very choice Italian. You shall see
anon how the murderer gets the love of Gon-
zago's wife. 280

256 galled jade: horse sore from chafing withers: shoulders

257 unwring: not galled

259 chorus: in Elizabethan drama one who speaks a prologue sum-
marizing the action

260 interpret; cf. n.

267 pox: small-pox, used frequently as an imprecation

268 the croaking . . . revenge; cf. n.

271 Confederate: conspiring to assist

273 Hecate; cf. n.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What! frightened with false fire?

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play. 284

King. Give me some light: away!

All. Lights, lights, lights!

Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.

Ham. "Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play; 288

For some must watch, while some must
sleep:

So runs the world away."

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, if
the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me, with
two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me
a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I. 296

"For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very—pajock." 300

Hor. You might have rimed.

Ham. O good Horatio! I'll take the ghost's
word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord. 304

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning?

Hor. I did very well note him.

282 false fire; *cf. n.* 284 Give o'er: *stop* 287 deer go weep; *cf. n.*
 291 forest of feathers: *an allusion to the plumes worn by tragic actors*
 292 turn Turk: *change completely*
 293 Provincial roses: *rosettes imitating the damask rose; cf. n.*
 razed: *slashed, i.e., with cuts or openings*
 294 fellowship: *partnership* cry: *company; cf. n.*
 295 share: *i.e., in the profits of the company; cf. n.* 297 Damon; *cf. n.*
 298 dismantled: *deprived* 300 pajock: *peacock(?) ; cf. n.*

Ham. Ah, ha! Come, some music! come,
the recorders! 308

“For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike he likes it not, perdy.”
Come, some music!

Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word
with you. 313

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir,—

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him? 316

Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous dis-
tempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler. 320

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more
richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me
to put him to his purgation would perhaps
plunge him into far more choler. 324

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into
some frame, and start not so wildly from my
affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir; pronounce. 328

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great
affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome. 331

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is
not of the right breed. If it shall please you
to make me a wholesome answer, I will do
your mother's commandment; if not, your

308 recorders: *wind instruments of the flute type*

310 perdy: *a corruption of par Dieu*

317 distempered: *disordered; cf. n.*

323 purgation: *purging; cf. n.*

328 pronounce: *speak*

320 choler: *anger; cf. n.*

326 frame: *definite form*

334 wholesome: *sensible*

pardon and my return shall be the end of my business. 337

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased; but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say,— 344

Ros. Then, thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart. 349

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers. 356

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend. 360

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark? 364

Ham. Ay, sir, but 'While the grass grows,'—the proverb is something musty.

Enter the Players, with recorders.

355 pickers and stealers: *hands*; cf. n.
363 voice: *support*

365 'While . . . grows'; cf. n.

O! the recorders: let me see one. To withdraw with you: why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O! my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe? 373

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot. 376

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying; govern these ventages with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most excellent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill. 385

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me. 396

367 withdraw with: *speak privately with*

368 recover the wind of: *keep watch upon; cf. n.*

378 know no touch: *have no skill at all*

391 compass: *range of voice*

392 organ: *musical instrument, the recorder*

369 toil: *snare*

380 ventages: *holes, stops*

395 fret; *cf. n.*

Enter Polonius.

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel? 401

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel. 404

Ham. Or like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then I will come to my mother by and by. [*Aside.*] They fool me to the top of my bent. [*Aloud.*] I will come by and by. 409

Pol. I will say so. *Exit.*

Ham. By and by is easily said. Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

'Tis now the very witching time of night, 413

When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day 416

Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.

O heart! lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom;
Let me be cruel, not unnatural; 420

I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! 424

Exit.

409 bent: *degree of endurance; cf. n.*

413 witching: *when spells are cast*

423 shent: *rebuked*

424 give them seals: *confirm them by making words into deeds*

419 Nero; *cf. n.*

Scene Three

[A Room in the Castle]

Enter King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
 To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;
 I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
 And he to England shall along with you. 4
 The terms of our estate may not endure
 Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow
 Out of his lunacies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide.
 Most holy and religious fear it is 8
 To keep those many many bodies safe
 That live and feed upon your majesty.

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound
 With all the strength and armour of the mind
 To keep itself from noyance; but much more 13
 That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest
 The lives of many. The cease of majesty
 Dies not alone, but, like a gulf doth draw 16
 What's near it with it; it is a massy wheel,
 Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
 To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
 Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls, 20
 Each small annexment, petty consequence,
 Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
 Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

2 range: *rove, roam*

5 terms: *condition*

11 single and peculiar: *private individual*

14 weal: *welfare*

16 gulf: *whirlpool*

22 Attends: *accompanies*

3 forthwith dispatch: *prepare at once*

8 fear: *caution*

13 noyance: *harm*

15 cease: *cessation, euphemism for 'death'*

21 annexment: *appendage*

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy
voyage; 24

For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Gent. We will haste us.

Exeunt [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

Enter Polonius.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet:
Behind the arras I'll convey myself 28
To hear the process; I'll warrant she'll tax him home;
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear 32
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

Exit [Polonius.]

O! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven; 36
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't;
A brother's murder! Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will:
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent; 40
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood, 44
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?

24 Arm: *prepare*

29 process: *interview* tax . . . home: *censure effectually*

33 of vantage: *from a favorable position, or, in addition*

37 primal: *primeval; cf. n.*

44 thicker than itself: *made over double its normal thickness*

47 confront: *oppose directly*

And what's in prayer but this two-fold force, 48
 To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
 Or pardon'd, being down? Then, I'll look up;
 My fault is past. But, O! what form of prayer
 Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder?' 52
 That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
 Of those effects for which I did the murder,
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
 May one be pardon'd and retain the offence? 56
 In the corrupted currents of this world
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
 And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
 Buys out the law; but 'tis not so above; 60
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults
 To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
 Try what repentance can: what can it not? 65
 Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
 O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
 O limed soul, that struggling to be free 68
 Art more engaged! Help, angels! make assay;
 Bow, stubborn knees; and heart with strings of steel
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe.
 All may be well. [Retires and kneels.]

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying; 73
 And now I'll do 't: and so he goes to heaven;

49 forestalled: *prevented in anticipation*

54 effects: i.e., *things acquired by an action*

55 ambition: i.e., *the realization of ambition* (so also *offence* in 56)

58 gilded hand: *hand using bribes of gold*

59 wicked prize: *reward of wickedness*

61 shuffling: *practice of trickery*

63 teeth and forehead: *very face*

68 limed: *caught with bird-lime*

60 Buys out: *corrupts*
 lies: *used in its legal sense; cf. n.*

64 rests: *remains*

69 engaged: *entangled*

And so am I reveng'd. That would be scann'd:
 A villain kills my father; and for that, 76
 I, his sole son, do this same villain send
 To heaven.

Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
 He took my father grossly, full of bread, 80

With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
 And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?
 But in our circumstance and course of thought
 'Tis heavy with him. And am I then reveng'd,
 To take him in the purging of his soul, 85
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
 No.

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent; 88

When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
 Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed,
 At gaming, swearing, or about some act
 That has no relish of salvation in 't; 92

Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
 And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
 As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. *Exit.*

[*The King rises and advances.*]

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain
 below: 97
 Words without thoughts never to heaven go. *Exit.*

75 would: *requires to* scann'd: *examined, considered*

79 hire and salary: *i.e., a reward*

80 full of bread: *without opportunity to fast; cf. n.*

81 broad blown: *in full bloom* flush: *lusty* 82 audit: *account*

83 in our circumstance and course: *according to our vague ideas*

86 passage: *i.e., to the other world* 88 hent: *intention*

92 relish: *flavor* 96 physic: *medicine, i.e., the postponement*

Scene Four

[*The Queen's Closet*]

Enter Queen and Polonius.

Pol. He will come straight. Look you lay home
to him;

Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your Grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here. 4
Pray you, be round with him.

Ham. (*Within.*) Mother, mother, mother!

Queen. I'll warrant you;
Fear me not. Withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*Polonius hides behind the arras.*]

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now, mother, what's the matter? 8

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much of-
fended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle
tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue. 12

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And,—would it were not so!—you are my mother. 16

Queen. Nay then, I'll set those to you that can
speak.

1 lay home: *talk plainly*
4 heat: *anger*

2 broad: *free, unrestrained*
14 rood: *cross*

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall
not budge;

You go not, till I set you up a glass

Where you may see the inmost part of you. 20

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder
me?

Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help! help! help!

Ham. [*Draws.*] How now! a rat? Dead, for a
ducat, dead! [*Makes a thrust through the arras.*]

Kills Polonius.

Pol. [*Behind.*] O! I am slain. 24

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not: is it the king?

Queen. O! what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed! almost as bad, good
mother, 28

As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.

[*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.*]

[*To Polonius.*] Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool,
farewell!

I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune; 32

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.

[*To the Queen.*] Leave wringing of your hands:
peace! sit you down,

And let me wring your heart; for so I shall

If it be made of penetrable stuff, 36

If damned custom have not brass'd it so

That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

37 brass'd: *hardened*

38 proof and bulwark: *an impenetrable defence*

sense: *feeling*

Queen. What have I done that thou dar'st wag thy
tongue

In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act 40

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,

Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love

And sets a blister there, makes marriage vows

As false as dicers' oaths; O! such a deed 45

As from the body of contraction plucks

The very soul, and sweet religion makes

A rhapsody of words; heaven's face doth glow,

Yea, this solidity and compound mass, 49

With tristful visage, as against the doom,

Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ay me! what act,

That roars so loud and thunders in the index?

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on

this; 53

The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.

See, what a grace was seated on this brow;

Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself, 56

An eye like Mars, to threaten and command,

A station like the herald Mercury

New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill,

A combination and a form indeed, 60

Where every god did seem to set his seal,

To give the world assurance of a man.

This was your husband: look you now, what follows.

Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear, 64

46 contraction: *marriage contract*
 48 rhapsody of words: *meaningless string of words* glow: *blush*
 49 solidity and compound mass: *the earth*
 50 tristful: *sad* doom: *doomsday* 52 index: *preface*
 54 counterfeit presentment: *portrayed likeness*
 56 front: *forehead* 58 station: *poise* 64 ear: *ear of wheat*

Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
 And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
 You cannot call it love, for at your age 68
 Thé hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
 And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
 Would step from this to this? [Sense, sure, you have,
 Else could you not have motion; but sure, that
 sense 72
 Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,
 Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd
 But it reserv'd some quantity of choice, 75
 To serve in such a difference.] What devil was 't
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
 [Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense 80
 Could not so mope.]
 O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax, 84
 And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame
 When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
 And reason panders will.

Queen.

O Hamlet! speak no more;
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul; 89
 And there I see such black and grained spots
 As will not leave their tinct.

67 batten: *grow fat on* moor: *a barren upland; cf. n.*

69 hey-day: *state of excitement, youthful high spirits*

71 Sense: *reasoning power* 72 motion: *emotion (?)*

73 apoplex'd: *atrophied* 74 thrall'd: *enslaved*

75 quantity of choice: *power to choose* 76 difference: *disagreement*

77 cozen'd: *cheated* hoodman-blind: *blind man's buff*

79 sans: *without* 81 mope: *act aimlessly* 83 mutine: *rise in mutiny*

86 charge: *command* 88 panders: *ministers to the gratifications of*

90 grained: *ingrained* 91 tinct: *color*

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed, 92
Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty,—

Queen. O! speak to me no more;
These words like daggers enter in mine ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet!

Ham. A murderer, and a villain;
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe 97
Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
A cut-purse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole, 100
And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more!

Ham. A king of shreds and patches,—

Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious
figure? 104

Queen. Alas! he's mad!

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O! say.

Ghost. Do not forget: this visitation 109
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits;
O! step between her and her fighting soul; 112

92 enseamed: *greasy*

98 precedent: *former* vice: *buffoon*; *cf. n.*

99 cut-purse: *pickpocket*

102 shreds and patches: *rabble and fools* (?); *cf. n.*

107 laps'd in time and passion: "having suffered time to go by and
passion to cool" (?)

108 important: *urgent*

97 tithe: *tenth part*

Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works:
 Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas! how is't with you,
 That you do bend your eye on vacancy 116
 And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
 Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
 And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
 Your bedded hair, like life in excrements, 120
 Starts up and stands an end. O gentle son!
 Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
 Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him, on him! Look you, how pale he
 glares! 124
 His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
 Would make them capable. Do not look upon me;
 Lest with this piteous action you convert
 My stern effects: then what I have to do 128
 Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals
 away; 133
 My father, in his habit as he liv'd;
 Look! where he goes, even now, out at the portal.

Exit Ghost.

117 incorporal: *incorporeal*

120 bedded: *smooth, flatly brushed*
 growth

125 conjoin'd: *united*

127 convert: *turn aside*

129 want true colour: *lack true cause*

life in excrements: *living out-*

126 capable: *capable of feeling*

128 effects: *purposes*

134 habit: *dress*

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain: 136
 This bodiless creation ecstasy
 Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
 And makes as healthful music. It is not madness 141

That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
 And I the matter will re-word, which madness
 Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
 Lay not that flattering unction to your soul, 145

That not your trespass but my madness speaks;
 It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
 Whiles rank corruption, mining all within, 148

Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
 Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
 And do not spread the compost on the weeds
 To make them ranker. Forgive me this my
 virtue; 152

For in the fatness of these pury times
 Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
 Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in
 twain. 156

Ham. O! throw away the worser part of it,
 And live the purer with the other half.
 Good night; but go not to mine uncle's bed;
 Assume a virtue, if you have it not. 160

[That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
 Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
 That to the use of actions fair and good
 He likewise gives a frock or livery, 164

143 re-word: *repeat word for word*

144 gambol from: *skip away from* grace: *God* 145 unction: *salve*

148 mining: *undermining* 153 fatness: *grossness* pury: *corpulent*

155 curb and woo: *bow and beg* 163 use: *habitual practice*

That aptly is put on.] Refrain to-night;
 And that shall lend a kind of easiness
 To the next abstinence: [the next more easy;
 For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
 And master ev'n the devil or throw him out 169
 With wondrous potency.] Once more, good-night:
 And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
 I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord, 172

[*Pointing to Polonius.*]

I do repent: but heaven hath pleas'd it so,
 To punish me with this, and this with me,
 That I must be their scourge and minister.
 I will bestow him, and will answer well 176
 The death I gave him. So, again, good-night.
 I must be cruel only to be kind:
 Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.
 [One word more, good lady.]

Queen. What shall I do? 180

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
 Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
 Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
 And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses, 184
 Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
 Make you to ravel all this matter out,
 That I essentially am not in madness,
 But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him
 know; 188

For who that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
 Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
 Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?

169 master; *cf. n.*

171 be bless'd: *to become blessed*

176 answer: *account for* 182 bloat: *bloated* 183 wanton: *wantonly*

184 reechy: *greasy*

185 paddling: *playing fondly*

187 essentially: *in my essential nature*

190 paddock: *toad* gib: *tom-cat*

191 dear concernings: *affairs dearly concerning one*

No, in despite of sense and secrecy, 192
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down. 196

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack!

I had forgot: 'tis so concluded on. 201

Ham. [There's letters seal'd; and my two school-
fellows,

Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work; 205

For 'tis the sport to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petar: and it shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines, 208
And blow them at the moon. O! 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.]

This man shall set me packing;
I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room. 212

Mother, good-night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.

Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you. 216
Good-night, mother.

Exit Hamlet tugging in Polonius.

194 famous ape: a reference not yet identified

195 conclusions: *experiments*

204 mandate: *command* sweep my way: *clear my path*

205 marshal: *conduct*

206 enginer: *maker of military engines, sapper*

207 Hoist: *blown up* petar: *small bomb* go hard But; *cf. n.*

211 set me packing: *send me off quickly*

3
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ACT FOURTH

Scene One

[*A Room in the Castle*]*Enter King, [and Queen, with Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.]**King.* There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves:You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son?[*Queen.* Bestow this place on us a little while.] 4
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Ah! my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?*Queen.* Mad as the sea and wind, when both contendWhich is the mightier. In his lawless fit, 8
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, 'A rat! a rat!'
And, in his brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.*King.* O heavy deed! 12
It had been so with us had we been there.
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence 17
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt,
This mad young man: but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit, 201 heaves: *prolonged sighs*11 brainish apprehension: *insane illusion, or, brain-sick mood*12 heavy: *grievous*17 providence: *foresight*18 short: *under control, tethered* out of haunt: *out of company*

But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd; 24
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure: he weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude! come away. 28
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch
But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho! Guildenstern! 32

Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this. 37

Exeunt [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done: [so, haply, slander,
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter, 41
As level as the cannon to his blank
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air.] O! come away; 44
My soul is full of discord and dismay. *Exeunt.*

22 divulging: *becoming known*

36 fair: *courteously*

41 diameter: *extent from side to side*

42 level: *straight* blank: *white spot in the centre of a target*

44 woundless: *invulnerable*

26 mineral: *mine*

40 so, haply, slander; *cf. n.*

Scene Two

[*Another Room in the Castle*]*Enter Hamlet.**Ham.* Safely stowed.

Ros. }
Guil. } (*Within.*) Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Ham. What noise? who calls on Hamlet?

O! here they come.

4

*Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.**Ros.* What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?*Ham.* Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.*Ros.* Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

8

Ham. Do not believe it.*Ros.* Believe what?*Ham.* That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge! what replication should be made by the son of a king?

14

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?*Ham.* Ay, sir, that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

23

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.13 replication: *reply*17 countenance: *favor*authorities: *offices of authority*

Ham. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king. 28

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing—

Guil. A thing, my lord!

Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. *Exeunt.*

Scene Three

[*Another Room in the Castle*]

Enter King, [attended.]

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body. How dangerous is it that this man goes loose! Yet must not we put the strong law on him: He's lov'd of the distracted multitude, 4 Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes; And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd, But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even, This sudden sending him away must seem 8 Deliberate pause: diseases desperate grown By desperate appliance are reliev'd, Or not at all.

Enter Rosencrantz.

How now! what hath befall'n?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord, 12 We cannot get from him.

29 The . . . body; cf. n.

32 Hide fox, and all after: *signal cry in the game of hide-and-seek*

4 distracted: *without power of forming logical judgments*

6 scourge: *punishment* weigh'd: *estimated, considered*

7 bear: *execute* smooth and even: *pleasantly and equably*

10 appliance: *remedy*

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord. 16

Enter Hamlet and Guildenstern.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper! Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table: that's the end.

[*King.* Alas, alas! 28

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.]

King. What dost thou mean by this? 32

Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius? 35

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby. 40

King. [*To some Attendants.*] Go seek him there.

Ham. He will stay till you come.

21 convocation: *assembly*; *cf. n.* politic: *crafty*

25 variable service: *variety of food*

34 progress: *state journey*

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve 44
For that which thou hast done, must send thee hence
With fiery quickness: therefore prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and every thing is bent 48
For England.

Ham. For England!

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them. But,
come; for England! Farewell, dear mother. 52

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: father and mother is man
and wife, man and wife is one flesh, and so, my
mother. Come, for England! *Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed
aboard: 57

Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night.

Away! for every thing is seal'd and done

That else leans on the affair: pray you, make
haste. 60

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,—

As my great power thereof may give thee sense,

Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red

After the Danish sword, and thy free awe 64

Pays homage to us,—thou mayst not coldly set

Our sovereign process, which imports at full,

48 bent: *prepared*

60 leans on: *depends upon*

64 free awe: *awe still felt but no longer enforced by arms*

65 set: *esteem*

57 at foot: *close behind*

63 cicatrice: *scar*

66 process: *formal command*

By letters conjuring to that effect,
 The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
 For like the hectic in my blood he rages, 69
 And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,
 Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. *Exit.*

Scene Four

[*Near Elsinore*]*Enter Fortinbras with an army.*

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
 Tell him that, by his licence, Fortinbras
 Claims the conveyance of a promis'd march
 Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous. 4
 If that his majesty would aught with us,
 We shall express our duty in his eye,
 And let him know so.

Cap. I will do 't, my lord.

For. Go softly on. 8

[*Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.*][*Enter Hamlet, Rosencrantz, &c.*]

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purpos'd, sir, I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland. 12

Ham. Who commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
 Or for some frontier? 16

Cap. Truly to speak, and with no addition,

69 hectic: *wasting fever*71 haps: *fortunes*3 conveyance: *convoy* 6 in his eye: *in his presence* 8 softly: *slowly*9 powers: *troops* 15 main: *chief part, or, chief power*17 no addition: *without adding fine words, or, without amplification*

We go to gain a little patch of ground
 That hath in it no profit but the name.
 To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it; 20
 Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
 A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd. 24

Ham. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand
 ducats

Will not debate the question of this straw:
 This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,
 That inward breaks, and shows no cause without 28
 Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.

Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [Exit.]

Ros. Will 't please you go, my lord?

Ham. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

[Exeunt all except Hamlet.]

How all occasions do inform against me, 32
 And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
 If his chief good and market of his time
 Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.

Sure he that made us with such large discourse; 36

Looking before and after, gave us not
 That capability and god-like reason
 To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
 Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple 40

Of thinking too precisely on the event,
 A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,
 And ever three parts coward, I do not know
 Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do;' 44

22 ranker: *richer* sold in fee: *sold absolutely*

26 debate: *bring to a settlement* straw: *trifling matter*

27 imposthume: *abscess*

36 large discourse: *latitude of comprehension* 39 fust: *become mouldy*

40 Bestial oblivion: *animal-like forgetfulness* 41 event: *outcome*

Sith I have cause and will and strength and means
 To do 't. Examples gross as earth exhort me:
 Witness this army of such mass and charge
 Led by a delicate and tender prince, 48
 Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd
 Makes mouths at the invisible event,
 Exposing what is mortal and unsure
 To all that fortune, death and danger dare, 52
 Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
 Is not to stir without great argument,
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd, 57
 Excitements of my reason and my blood,
 And let all sleep, while, to my shame, I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
 That, for a fantasy and trick of fame, 61
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
 Which is not tomb enough and continent 64
 To hide the slain? O! from this time forth,
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

Exit.]

Scene Five

*[Elsinore. A Room in the Castle]**Enter Queen and Horatio, [with a Gentleman.]**Queen.* I will not speak with her.*Gent.* She is importunate, indeed distract:
Her mood will needs be pitied.45. Sith: *since*47 charge: *expense*50 mouths: *grimaces*54 argument: *cause*58 Excitements: *incentives*61 trick: *trifle*64 continent: *receptacle*Scene V, S. d.; *cf. n.*2 importunate: *persistent*

Queen. What would she have?

Gent. She speaks much of her father; says she
hears 4

There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her
heart;

Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,

Yet the unshaped use of it doth move 8

The hearers to collection; they aim at it,

And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;

Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield
them,

Indeed would make one think there might be
thought, 12

Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Hor. 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she
may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Queen. Let her come in. [Exit Gentleman.]

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is, 17

Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:

So full of artless jealousy is guilt,

It spills itself in fearing to be spilt. 20

Enter Ophelia distracted.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia!

5 tricks: *deceptions*

6 Spurns: *kicks* enviously: *spitefully* in doubt: *ambiguous*

8 unshaped: *artless* 9 collection: *inference* aim: *guess*

11 yield them: *bring her words forth*

13 nothing: *not at all* much: *very*

15 ill-breeding: *plotting ill*

19 artless: *unskilful*

20 spills: *ruins*

18 great amiss: *calamity*

S. d. Cf. n.

Oph. "How should I your true love know
 From another one? 24
 By his cockle hat and staff,
 And his sandal shoon."

Queen. Alas! sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark. 28
 "He is dead and gone, lady,
 He is dead and gone;
 At his head a grass-green turf;
 At his heels a stone." 32

O, ho!

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia,—

Oph. Pray you, mark.
 "White his shroud as the mountain
 snow,—" 36

Enter King.

Queen. Alas! look here, my lord.

Oph. "Larded with sweet flowers;
 Which bewept to the grave did go
 With true-love showers." 40

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl
 was a baker's daughter. Lord! we know what
 we are, but know not what we may be. God be
 at your table! 45

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this; but
 when they ask you what it means, say you this:
 "To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day, 49
 All in the morning betime,
 And I a maid at your window,
 To be your Valentine: 52

25 cockle hat: *pilgrim's hat*; *cf. n.*

26 shoon: *shoes*

42 God 'ild: *God reward*

38 larded: *garnished*

owl was a baker's daughter; *cf. n.*

Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
 And dupp'd the chamber door;
 Let in the maid, that out a maid
 Never departed more." 56

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, la! without an oath, I'll make an
 end on 't:

"By Gis and by Saint Charity,
 Alack, and fie for shame! 60

Young men will do 't, if they come to 't;
 By Cock they are to blame.

Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
 You promis'd me to wed. 64

So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
 An thou hadst not come to my bed."

King. How long hath she been thus? 67

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be
 patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think
 they should lay him i' the cold ground. My
 brother shall know of it: and so I thank you
 for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good-
 night, ladies; good-night, sweet ladies; good-
 night, good-night. *Exit.*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I
 pray you. [*Exit Horatio.*]

O! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs 76
 All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude!
 When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
 But in battalions. First, her father slain;
 Next, your son gone; but he most violent author 80
 Of his own just remove: the people muddied,

54 dupp'd: *opened*

62 Cock: *perversion of 'God' in oaths*

81 remove: *removal* muddied: *confused in mind*

59 by Gis: *by Jesus*

Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and
whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but
greenly,

In hugger-mugger to inter him: poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgment, 85
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts:
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France, 88
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd, 92
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude! this,
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death. *A noise within.*

Queen. Alack! what noise is this?

Enter a Messenger.

King. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard
the door. 97

What is the matter?

Mess. Save yourself, my lord;
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head, 101
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,

83 greenly: *foolishly* 84 In hugger-mugger: *secretly*
89 wonder: *doubt* in clouds: *in gloom, or, invisible*
90 buzzers: *tale-bearers* 92 Wherein: *i.e., in which pestilent speeches*
93 nothing stick: *not at all hesitate* 94 In ear and ear: *in many ears*
95 murdering-piece: *small cannon firing case shot*
97 Switzers: *Swiss guards; cf. n.*
99 overpeering: *rising above* list: *boundary*
101 head: *hostile advance*

Antiquity forgot, custom not known, 104
 The ratifiers and props of every word,
 They cry, 'Choose we; Laertes shall be king!'
 Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
 'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!' 108

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
 O! this is counter, you false Danish dogs!

King. The doors are broke. *Noise within.*

Enter Laertes with others.

Laer. Where is the king? Sirs, stand you all
 without. 112

All. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

All. We will, we will.

[*They retire without the door.*]

Laer. I thank you: keep the door. O thou vile
 king!

Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes. 116

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm proclaims
 me bastard,

Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot
 Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow
 Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
 That thy rebellion looks so giant-like? 121

Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
 There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
 That treason can but peep to what it would,
 Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes, 125
 Why thou art thus incens'd. Let him go, Gertrude.

110 counter: following the trail in a direction opposite to that which
 the game has taken

118 cuckold: husband with an unfaithful wife

Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill. 128

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!

Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand, 132

That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd
Most throughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world: 136

And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,

If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is 't writ in your
revenge, 140

That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King: Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my
arms; 144

And like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak

Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death, 148

131 grace: *sense of duty*

133 give to negligence: *disregard*

136 My will: *as regaras my will*

141 swoopstake: *indiscriminately; cf. n.*

145 life-rendering pelican; *cf. n.*

146 Repast: *feed*

And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.

A noise within. [Voices.] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that? 152

Enter Ophelia.

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia! 157
O heavens! is 't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine 160
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. "They bore him barefac'd on the bier;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny; 164
And in his grave rain'd many a tear;—"

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade
revenge,
It could not move thus. 168

Oph. "You must sing, a-down a-down,
And you call him a-down-a."

O how the wheel becomes it! It is the false
steward that stole his master's daughter. 172

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remem-
brance; pray, love, remember: and there is
pansies, that's for thoughts. 176

149 sensibly: *feelingly*

161 instance: *illustrative example*

171 wheel; *cf. n.* false steward; *cf. n.*

174 rosemary; *cf. n.*

160 fine: *delicate, subtle*

164 Hey non nonny; *cf. n.*

176 pansies; *cf. n.*

Laer. A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines; there's rue for you; and here's some for me; we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays. O! you must wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy; I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died. They say he made a good end,— 185

“For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.”

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself, She turns to favour and to prettiness. 188

Oph. “And will he not come again?
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead;
Go to thy death-bed, 192
He never will come again.
His beard was as white as snow
All flaxen was his poll,
He is gone, he is gone, 196
And we cast away moan:
God ha' mercy on his soul!”

And of all Christian souls! I pray God. God be wi' ye! *Exit Ophelia.*

Laer. Do you see this, O God? 201

King. Laertes, I must common with your grief, Or you deny me right. Go but apart, Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will, 204

177 document: *lesson*

179 fennel: *emblem of flattery* columbines: *emblems of thanklessness*

180 rue: *emblem of repentance; cf. n.* 182 difference; *cf. n.*

183 daisy: *emblem of dissemblers* violets: *emblems of faithfulness*

186 For . . . joy; *cf. n.* 187 passion: *suffering*

188 favour: *charm* 189 And . . . again; *cf. n.* 195 poll: *head*

197 cast away: *shipwrecked*

202 common: *share*

203 right: *equitable treatment*

And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.
 If by direct or by collateral hand
 They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
 Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours, 208
 To you in satisfaction; but if not,
 Be you content to lend your patience to us,
 And we shall jointly labour with your soul
 To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so: 212

His means of death, his obscure burial,
 No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
 No noble rite nor formal ostentation,
 Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
 That I must call 't in question.

King. So you shall; 217

And where the offence is let the great axe fall.
 I pray you go with me. *Exeunt.*

Scene Six

[*Another Room in the Castle*]

Enter Horatio with an Attendant.

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?

Atten. Sailors, sir: they say, they have letters
 for you.

Hor. Let them come in. [*Exit Attendant.*]

I do not know from what part of the world 4

I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailor.

Sail. God bless you, sir.

206 collateral: *indirect*

213 means: *manner* obscure: *lowly, mean*

214 trophy: *emblem, or, memorial over a grave*
displaying armorial bearings

215 ostentation: *funeral ceremony*

217 call 't in question: *demand an explanation*

207 touch'd: *implicated*

hatchment: *tablet*

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

Sail. He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir;—it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England;—if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

12

Reads the letter.

Hor. “Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very war-like appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour; in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy, but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

He that thou knowest thine, 32

HAMLET.”

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. *Exeunt.*

13 overlooked: *perused*
17 appointment: *equipment*
28 bore: *literally, calibre, hence importance*

24 repair: *come*
34 way: *passage*

Scene Seven

[A Room in the Castle]

Enter King and Laertes.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance
seal,

And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain 4
Pursu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears: but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else, 8
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O! for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks, and for myself,— 12
My virtue or my plague, be it either which,—
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive, 16
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone, 20
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,

3 knowing: *intelligent, or, convinced*

7 capital: *punishable by death*

14 conjunctive: *closely united*

18 general gender: *common people*

21 gyves: *leg-irons; cf. n.*

5 Pursu'd: *sought*

10 unsinew'd: *weak*

17 count: *legal indictment*

20 spring; *cf. n.*

22 slightly timber'd: *of too light a wood*

Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them. 24

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age 28
For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that; you must
not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear
more; 33
I lov'd your father, and we love ourself,
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—

Enter a Messenger.

How now! what news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty; this to the queen. 37

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:
They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them 40
[Of him that brought them.]

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.
Leave us. *Exit Messenger.*

“High and mighty, you shall know I am set
naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I
beg leave to see your kingly eyes; when I shall,
first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the
occasions of my sudden and more strange re-
turn.
HAMLET.”

23 reverted: *returned*; *cf. n.*
27 praises . . . again; *cf. n.*
40 Claudio; *cf. n.*

28 challenger on mount; *cf. n.*
44 naked: *without resources*

What should this mean? Are all the rest come
back? 49

Or is it some abuse and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. 'Naked,'
And in a postscript here, he says, 'alone.' 52
Can you advise me?

Laer. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come:
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth, 56
'Thus didst thou.'

King. If it be so, Laertes,
As how should it be so? how otherwise?
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace. 60

King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device, 64
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice
And call it accident.

[*Laer.* My lord, I will be rul'd; 68
The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality 72
Wherein, they say, you shine; your sum of parts

50 abuse: *imposture*

62 checking: *stopping short*

67 uncharge: *acquit of guilt* practice: *stratagem*

70 organ: *instrument* falls: *happens*

51 character: *handwriting*

Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one, and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my lord? 76

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears
Than settled age his sables and his weeds, 80
Importing health and graveness.] Two months since
Here was a gentleman of Normandy.

I've seen myself, and serv'd against the French,
And they can well on horseback; but this gallant 84
Had witchcraft in 't, he grew unto his seat,
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast; so far he topp'd my thought, 88
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman was 't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamond.

King. The very same. 92

Laer. I know him well; he is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report 96
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed

76 siege: *rank*; cf. n. part: *attribute* 77 riband: *ribbon*
79 livery: *garb* 80 weeds: *garments* 81 health: *prosperity*
84 can well: *are skilled* 87 incorps'd and demi-natur'd; cf. n.
88 topp'd: *surpassed* 89 in . . . tricks; cf. n.
95 confession: *report* 96 masterly report; cf. n.
97 art and exercise: *skilful exercise* defence: *science of defence*

If one could match you; [the scrimers of their
nation, 100

He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them.] Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg 104
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this,—

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow, 108
A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your father,
But that I know love is begun by time,
And that I see, in passages of proof, 112
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
[There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it,
And nothing is at a like goodness still, 116
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too-much. That we would do,
We should do when we would, for this 'would'
changes,

And hath abatements and delays as many 120
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer;]
Hamlet comes back; what would you undertake
To show yourself your father's son in deed 125
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

100 scrimers: *fencers*
112 passages of proof; *cf. n.*
120 abatements: *diminutions*

105 play: *fence*
117 plurisy: *fulness; cf. n.*
122 spendthrift sigh; *cf. n.*

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
 Revenge should have no bounds. But, good
 Laertes, 128

Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
 Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home;
 We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
 And set a double varnish on the fame 132
 The Frenchman gave you, bring you, in fine, together,
 And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,
 Most generous and free from all contriving,
 Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease 136
 Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
 A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice
 Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do 't;
 And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword. 140
 I bought an unction of a mountebank,
 So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
 Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
 Collected from all simples that have virtue 144
 Under the moon, can save the thing from death
 That is but scratch'd withal; I'll touch my point
 With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
 It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this; 148
 Weigh what convenience both of time and means
 May fit us to our shape. If this should fail,
 And that our drift look through our bad perform-
 ance 151
 'Twere better not assay'd; therefore this project
 Should have a back or second, that might hold,

131 put on: *instigate*138 unbated: *not blunted*140 anoint: *smear*143 cataplasm: *poultice*145 moon; *cf. n.*136 peruse: *inspect*pass of practice; *cf. n.*141 mountebank; *cf. n.*144 simples: *medicinal herbs*150 our shape: *part we purpose to act*

If this should blast in proof. Soft! let me see;
 We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings:
 I ha't:

156

When in your motion you are hot and dry,—
 As make your bouts more violent to that end,—
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him
 A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
 Our purpose may hold there. [But stay! what noise?]

161

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet queen!

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
 So fast they follow: your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
 There with fantastic garlands did she come,
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
 But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call
 them:

169

There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
 Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
 When down her weedy trophies and herself
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread
 wide,

176

And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;
 Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,
 As one incapable of her own distress,

154 blast in proof: *burst when tested*

157 motion: *bodily exertion*

161 stuck: *thrust*

170 crow-flowers: *buttercups; cf. n. orchids*

171 liberal: *licentious*

175 weedy: *of plants*

155 cunnings: *skill; cf. n.*

160 for the nonce: *for the purpose*

168 hoar: *greyish-white*

long purples: *early purple*

173 coronet: *garlanded*

179 incapable: *having no understanding*

Or like a creature native and indu'd 180
 Unto that element; but long it could not be
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
 To muddy death.

Laer. Alas! then, she is drown'd? 184

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
 And therefore I forbid my tears; but yet
 It is our trick, nature her custom holds, 188
 Let shame say what it will; when these are gone
 The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord!

I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
 But that this folly douts it. *Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude.

How much I had to do to calm his rage! 193

Now fear I this will give it start again;
 Therefore let's follow. *Exeunt.*

ACT FIFTH

Scene One

[*A Churchyard*]

Enter two Clowns.

[*First*] *Clo.* Is she to be buried in Christian
 burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

Other. I tell thee she is; and therefore make
 her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her,
 and finds it Christian burial. 5

180 indu'd: *endowed with qualities fitting her* 188 trick: *custom*
 190 woman; *cf. n.* 192 douts: *puts out, extinguishes*
 S. d. Clowns: *low comedians, or, peasants; cf. n.*
 4 crowner: *coroner* sat on: *passed on*

[First] Clo. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

Other. Why, 'tis found so. 8

[First] Clo. It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly it argues an act; and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

Other. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver,— 15

[First] Clo. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that? but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life. 22

Other. But is this law?

[First] Clo. Ay, marry, is 't; crowner's quest law. 25

Other. Will you ha' the truth on 't? If this had not been a gentlewoman she should have been buried out o' Christian burial. 28

[First] Clo. Why, there thou sayest; and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession. 35

Other. Was he a gentleman?

[First] Clo. A' was the first that ever bore arms.

9 *se offendendo*; cf. n.

12 branches: *divisions* [of learning]

13 argal: *corruption of ergo, therefore*

15 delver: *digger*

24 quest: *inquest*

32 even: *fellow*

37 bore arms; cf. n.

Other. Why, he had none. 39

[*First*] *Clo.* What! art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digged; could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee; if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

Other. Go to. 45

[*First*] *Clo.* What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

Other. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants. 50

[*First*] *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well, but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill; now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To 't again; come.

Other. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter? 58

[*First*] *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

Other. Marry, now I can tell.

[*First*] *Clo.* To 't.

Other. Mass, I cannot tell. 62

Enter Hamlet and Horatio afar off.

[*First*] *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say, 'a grave-maker:' the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[*Exit other Clown.*]

44 confess thyself; *cf. n.*

68 Yaughan; *cf. n.* stoup: *two quart measure*

59 unyoke; *cf. n.*

[*First Clown digs, and*] sings.

“In youth, when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet, 70
To contract, O! the time, for-a my behove,
O! methought there was nothing meet.”

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making? 74

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so; the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense. 78

Clown sings.

“But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intil the land,
As if I had never been such.” 82

[*Throws up a skull.*]

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once; how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-offices, one that would circumvent God, might it not? 88

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say, 'Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?' This might be my Lord Such-a-one, that praised my Lord Such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it, might it not? 94

Hor. Ay, my lord.

69 In . . . love; *cf. n.*

75 property of easiness; *cf. n.*

84 jowls: *dashes*

71 behove: *benefit*

81 intil: *into*

87 o'er-offices: *exercises his office over*

Ham. Why, e'en so, and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see 't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on 't.

Clown sings.

“A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade, 102
 For and a shrouding sheet;
 O! a pit of clay for to be made
 For such a guest is meet.”

[*Throws up another skull.*]

Ham. There's another; why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in 's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries; is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyance of his lands will hardly lie in this box, and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha? 122

- 97 chapless: *lacking the lower jaw* mazzard: *head*
 101 loggats; *cf. n.* 107 quiddities: *subtleties*
 108 quilllets: *minute distinctions* tenures; *cf. n.* 110 sconce: *head*
 111 action of battery; *cf. n.*
 113 recognizances; *cf. n.* statutes; *cf. n.*
 115 fines; *cf. n.* vouchers; *cf. n.*
 116 recoveries; *cf. n.* fine: *end*
 119 indentures: *mutual agreements* 120 conveyance; *cf. n.*

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins, too. 125

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave 's this, sir?

[*First*] *Clo.* Mine, sir,

"O! a pit of clay for to be made 130

For such a guest is meet."

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in 't.

[*First*] *Clo.* You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours; for my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet it is mine. 136

Ham. Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

[*First*] *Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for? 142

[*First*] *Clo.* For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

[*First*] *Clo.* For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in 't? 146

[*First*] *Clo.* One that was a woman, sir; but rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the

127 assurance: *security*; *cf. n.*
150 by the card: *with precision*; *cf. n.*

149 absolute: *precise*
152 picked: *fastidious*

heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-maker? 155

[*First*] *Clo.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last King Hamlet overcame Fortinbras. 158

Ham. How long is that since?

[*First*] *Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that; it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England. 163

Ham. Ay, marry; why was he sent into England?

[*First*] *Clo.* Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there. 168

Ham. Why?

[*First*] *Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he. 171

Ham. How came he mad?

[*First*] *Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely? 174

[*First*] *Clo.* Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

[*First*] *Clo.* Why, here in Denmark; I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years. 178

Ham. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

[*First*] *Clo.* Faith, if he be not rotten before he die,—as we have many pocky corses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in,—he will last you some eight year or nine year; a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another? 186

[First] Clo. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade that he will keep out water a great while, and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull hath lain you i' the earth three-and-twenty years.

192

Ham. Whose was it?

[First] Clo. A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

196

[First] Clo. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Ham. This!

[First] Clo. E'en that.

202

Ham. Let me see.—[Takes the skull.]—Alas! poor Yorick. I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chapfallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

218

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah! 222

[*Puts down the skull.*]

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole? 227

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam, and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

“Imperial Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away: 238

O! that that earth, which kept the world in
awe,

Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw.”

But soft! but soft! aside: here comes the king.

Enter King, Queen, Laertes, [a Priest,] and a Coffin, with Lords attendant.

The queen, the courtiers: who is that they follow? 242
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo it own life; 'twas of some estate.

228 curiously: *minutely*
240 flaw: *squall of wind*

231 likelihood: *probability*
245 estate: *rank*

Couch we awhile, and mark. 246

[Retiring with Horatio.]

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham.

That is Laertes,

A very noble youth: mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd 250

As we have warrantise: her death was doubtful,
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,

She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers, 254

Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her;
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,

Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial. 258

Laer. Must there no more be done?

Priest.

No more be done:

We should profane the service of the dead,

To sing a requiem, and such rest to her

As to peace-parted souls.

Laer.

Lay her i' the earth; 262

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh

May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,

A ministering angel shall my sister be,

When thou liest howling.

Ham.

What! the fair Ophelia? 266

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell!

[Scattering flowers.]

I hop'd thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;

I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,

And not have strew'd thy grave.

250 enlarg'd: *extended*

251 warrantise: *warrant* doubtful: *suspicious*

255 Shards: *fragments of pottery* 256 crants: *garlands; cf. n.*

257 strewments: *flowers strewn on a grave*

262 peace-parted: *departed in peace*

Laer.

O! treble woe 270

Fall ten times treble on that cursed head
 Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
 Depriv'd thee of. Hold off the earth awhile,
 Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.

Leaps into the grave.

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
 Till of this flat a mountain you have made, 276
 To o'er-top old Pelion or the skyish head
 Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he whose grief
 Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow 279
 Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
 Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
 Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*]

Laer. The devil take thy soul! 282

*[Grapples with him.]**Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.

I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;
 For though I am not splenetic and rash
 Yet have I in me something dangerous, 286
 Which let thy wisdom fear. Away thy hand!

King. Pluck them asunder.*Queen.* Hamlet! Hamlet!*All.* Gentlemen,—*Hor.* Good my lord, be quiet.

*[The Attendants part them, and they come
 out of the grave.]*

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this
 theme 290

Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son! what theme?

272 ingenious: *delicately sensitive*
 280 wandering stars: *planets*

277 Pelion; *cf. n.*
 285 splenetic: *quick-tempered*

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
 Could not, with all their quantity of love, 294
 Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

King. O! he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:
 Woo't weep? woo't fight? [woo't fast?] woo't tear
 thyself? 299

Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
 I'll do 't. Dost thou come here to whine?
 To outface me with leaping in her grave? 302

Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
 And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
 Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
 Singeing his pate against the burning zone, 306
 Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
 I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness:
 And thus a while the fit will work on him;
 Anon, as patient as the female dove, 310
 When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,
 His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir;
 What is the reason that you use me thus?
 I lov'd you ever: but it is no matter; 314
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,
 The cat will mew and dog will have his day. *Exit.*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[*Exit Horatio.*]

[*To Laertes.*] Strengthen your patience in our last
 night's speech; 318

297 forbear: *leave alone*

300 eisel: *vinegar; cf. n.*

308 This . . . drooping; *cf. n.*

311 golden couplets; *cf. n.*

299 Woo't: *wilt thou*

306 burning zone: *path of the sun*

318 in: *in the thought of*

We'll put the matter to the present push.
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
 This grave shall have a living monument:
 An hour of quiet shortly shall we see; 322
 Till then, in patience our proceeding be. *Exeunt.*

Scene Two

[*A Hall in the Castle*]*Enter Hamlet and Horatio.*

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see the
 other;

You do remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my lord?

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of
 fighting 4

That would not let me sleep; methought I lay
 Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,—
 And prais'd be rashness for it, let us know,
 Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well 8
 When our deep plots do pall; and that should teach us
 There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
 Rough-hew them how we will.

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin, 12
 My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
 Grop'd I to find out them, had my desire,
 Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew
 To mine own room again; making so bold— 16
 My fears forgetting manners—to unseal
 Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,
 O royal knavery! an exact command,

319 present push: *immediate trial*
 6 mutines: *mutineers* bilboes: *shackles*
 13 sea-gown; *cf. n.*

321 living: *lasting*
 9 pall: *fail*
 15 Finger'd: *pilfered*

Larded with many several sorts of reasons 20
 Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
 With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
 That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
 No, not to stay the grinding of the axe, 24
 My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is 't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission: read it at more
 leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

Hor. I beseech you. 28

Ham. Being thus be-netted round with villainies,—
 Ere I could make a prologue to my brains
 They had begun the play,—I sat me down,
 Devis'd a new commission, wrote it fair; 32
 I once did hold it, as our statist's do,
 A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
 How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
 It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know 36
 The effect of what I wrote?

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,
 As England was his faithful tributary,
 As love between them like the palm should flourish, 40
 As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
 And many such-like 'As'es of great charge,
 That, on the view and knowing of these contents, 44
 Without debatement further, more or less,
 He should the bearers put to sudden death,
 Not shriving-time allow'd.

22 bugs . . . life; *cf. n.* 23 supervise: *perusal* bated: *deducted*
 29 be-netted: *ensnared* 30 prologue . . . play; *cf. n.*
 33 statist: *statesman* 36 yeoman's service: *good and faithful service*
 41 wheaten garland: *emblem of peace*
 42 comma: *bond of connection; cf. n.*
 47 shriving-time: *time for absolution* 43 'As'es; *cf. n.*

Hor. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant. 48

I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other,
Subscrib'd it, gave 't th' impression, plac'd it
safely, 52

The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight, and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't. 56

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow.
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes 60
Between the pass and fell-incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think'st thee, stand me now
upon—

He that hath kill'd my king and whor'd my mother, 64
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage—is 't not perfect conscience
To quit him with this arm? and is 't not to be
damn'd 68

To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

48 ordinant: *controlling*

52 Subscrib'd: *signed, or, addressed*

53 changeling: *substitute*

59 insinuation: *artful intrusion*

62 opposites: *opponents*

65 election; *cf. n.*

50 model: *exact likeness*

impression: *i.e., of the seal*

61 fell-incensed: *cruelly angered*

63 stand . . . upon: *vitally concern*

66 angle: *fishing-hook* 67 cozenage: *cheating*

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England

What is the issue of the business there. 72

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life's no more than to say 'One.'

But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself; 76

For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I'll count his favours:
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace! who comes here? 80

Enter young Osric.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir. [*Aside to Horatio.*] Dost know this water-fly? 84

Hor. [*Aside to Hamlet.*] No, my good lord.

Ham. [*Aside to Horatio.*] Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt. 91

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head. 97

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

78 count: *make account of*

79 bravery: *ostentatious display*

84 water-fly; *cf. n.*

90 mess; *cf. n.* chough: *small chattering bird (?)*; *cf. n.*

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly. 100

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion. 103

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, as 'twere, I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter,— 108

Ham. I beseech you, remember—

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*]

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. [Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing; indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see. 117

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

109 remember; *cf. n.*

110 mine ease; *cf. n.*

113 differences: *distinguishing features* soft: *gentle*

115 card: *directory* 118 definement: *description* perdition: *loss*

119 divide inventorially: *catalogue*

121 yaw: *stagger; cf. n.* neither: *too*

123 great article: *large scope* infusion: *character imparted by nature*

125 semblable: *like* 126 trace: *follow* umbrage: *shadow*

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him. 128

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is 't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do 't, sir, really. 133

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes? 136

Hor. His purse is empty already; all 's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know you are not ignorant— 140

Ham. I would you did, sir; in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir.]

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

[Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself. 147

Osr. I mean, sir,] for his weapon; [but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.]

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger. 152

Ham. That's two of his weapons; but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses; against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and

129 concernancy: *meaning*

132 another tongue; *cf. n.*

142 approve me: *commend me*

149 imputation: *reputation*

150 unfellowed; *without an equal*

130 more rawer: *too unskilled*

134 nomination: *naming*

146 compare with: *vie with*

meed: *merit, worth*

155 imponed: *staked*

poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so: three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit. 160

Ham. What call you the carriages?

[*Hor.* I knew you must be edified by the margent, ere you had done.]

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers. 164

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides; I would it might be hangers till then. But, on; six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this 'imponed,' as you call it?

Osr. The king sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid on twelve for nine, and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer. 176

Ham. How if I answer no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall; if it please his majesty, 'tis the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought; the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits. 185

Osr. Shall I re-deliver you so?

157 assigns: *appurtenances*
suspended

hangers: *straps from which a sword is*

158 carriages: *hangers*

159 dear to fancy: *unusual in design* responsive: *corresponding*

160 delicate: *finely wrought* liberal conceit: *tasteful design*

162 margent: *commentary*

165 german: *appropriate*

174 twelve for nine; *cf. n.*

181 breathing time: *exercise period*

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish
your nature will. 188

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Ham. Yours, yours. [*Exit Osr.*] He does
well to commend it himself; there are no
tongues else for 's turn. 192

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell
on his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug before he
sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the
same bevy, that I know the drossy age dotes
on—only got the tune of the time and outward
habit of encounter, a kind of yesty collection
which carries them through and through the
most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but
blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out. 202

[*Enter a Lord.*]

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him
to you by young Osrice, who brings back to him,
that you attend him in the hall; he sends to
know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes,
or that you will take longer time. 207

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they
follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks,
mine is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I
be so able as now.

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are com-
ing down. 213

Ham. In happy time.

193 lapwing: *peewit*; *cf. n.*

197 drossy: *frivolous, or, composed of dross, unrefined*

198 tune: *temper, humor, mood*

199 yesty: *frothy*

201 fond and winnowed; *cf. n.*

214 In happy time: *at an appropriate time*

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play. 217

Ham. She well instructs me.] [*Exit Lord.*]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all 's here about my heart; but it is no matter. 224

Hor. Nay, good my lord,—

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman. 228

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it; I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit. 231

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is 't to leave betimes?

[*Let be.*] 238

Enter King, Queen, Laertes and Lords, with other Attendants with foils and gauntlets, a table and flagons of wine on it.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts the hand of Laertes into that of Hamlet.*]

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir; I've done you wrong;

But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With sore distraction. What I have done, 244

That might your nature, honour and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was 't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away, 248

And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.

Who does it then? His madness. If 't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd; 252

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,

Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house, 257

And hurt my brother.

Laer.

I am satisfied in nature,

Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most

To my revenge; but in my terms of honour 260

I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation,

Till by some elder masters, of known honour,

I have a voice and precedent of peace,

To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time,

I do receive your offer'd love like love, 265

And will not wrong it.

Ham.

I embrace it freely;

And will this brother's wager frankly play.

Give us the foils. Come on.

Laer.

Come, one for me. 268

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance

242 presence: *royal assembly*

258 satisfied in nature; *cf. n.*

264 ungor'd: *uninjured*

245 exception: *disapproval*

263 voice: *opinion*

269 foil; *cf. n.*

Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand. 272

King. Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin
Hamlet,

You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;

Your Grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both;
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy; let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a
length?

Osr. Ay, my good lord. 280

Prepare to play.

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,

Or quit in answer of the third exchange,

Let all the battlements their ordnance fire; 284

The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;

And in the cup an union shall he throw,

Richer than that which four successive kings

In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the
cups; 288

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,

The trumpet to the cannoneer without,

The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,

'Now the king drinks to Hamlet!' Come, begin;

And you, the judges, bear a wary eye. 293

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. *They play.*

271 Stick . . . off: *stand out in relief*

283 quit; *cf. n.* 286 union: *pearl*

289 kettle: *kettledrum*

Ham. One.
 Laer. No.
 Ham. Judgment.
 Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.
 Laer. Well; again.
 King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is
 thine; 296
 Here's to thy health. Give him the cup.
Trumpets sound; and shot goes off.
 Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.
 Come.—[*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?
 Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess. 300
 King. Our son shall win.
 Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.
 Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows;
 The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.
 Ham. Good madam!
 King. Gertrude, do not drink. 304
 Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.
 King. [*Aside.*] It is the poison'd cup! it is too late.
 Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.
 Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face. 308
 Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.
 King. I do not think 't.
 Laer. [*Aside.*] And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my con-
 science.
 Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes. You but
 dally;
 I pray you, pass with your best violence. 312
 I am afeard you make a wanton of me.
 Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They*] play.
 Osr. Nothing, neither way.

301 fat: *out of training*
 313 wanton: *spoiled child*

302 napkin: *handkerchief*

Laer. Have at you now.

In scuffling they change rapiers.

King. Part them! they are incens'd.

Ham. Nay, come, again. [*The Queen falls.*]

Osr. Look to the queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord?

Osr. How is it, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe,
Osric; 323

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the queen?

King. She swoonds to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink, [—O my dear
Hamlet! 323

The drink, the drink;] I am poison'd. [*Dies.*]

Ham. O villainy! Ho! let the door be lock'd:

Treachery! seek it out. [*Laertes falls.*]

Laer. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain;

No medicine in the world can do thee good; 328

In thee there is not half an hour of life;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated and evenom'd. The foul practice

Hath turn'd itself on me; lo! here I lie, 332

Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd.

I can no more. The king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point evenom'd too!—

Then, venom, to thy work. *Hurts the King.*

All. Treason! treason! 337

King. O! yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned

Dane,

Drink off this potion;—is thy union here? 340

Follow my mother.

King dies.

Laer.

He is justly serv'd;

It is a poison temper'd by himself.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,

Nor thine on me!

Dies.

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow
thee. 346

I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!

You that look pale and tremble at this chance,

That are but mutes or audience to this act, 349

Had I but time,—as this fell sergeant, death,

Is strict in his arrest,—O! I could tell you—

But let it be. Horatio, I am dead; 352

Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright

To the unsatisfied.

Hor.

Never believe it;

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:

Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham.

As thou'rt a man, 356

Give me the cup: let go; by heaven, I'll have 't.

O good Horatio, what a wounded name,

Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me.

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart, 360

Absent thee from felicity awhile,

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,

To tell my story.

March afar off, and shout within.

What war-like noise is this?

Enter Osrice.

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from

Poland,

364

342 temper'd: *compounded*

350 sergeant: *sheriff's officer*

355 Roman; *cf. n.*

To the ambassadors of England gives
This war-like volley.

Ham.

O! I die, Horatio;

The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England, 368
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited—The rest is silence. *Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart. Good-night, sweet
prince, 373

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither?

*Enter Fortinbras, and English Ambassador, with
drum, colours, and Attendants.*

Fort. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it ye would see? 376

If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

Fort. This quarry cries on havoc. O proud death!
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot 380
So bloodily hast struck?

Amb.

The sight is dismal;

And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd, 384
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
Where should we have our thanks?

Hor.

Not from his mouth,

Had it the ability of life to thank you: 387

367 o'er-crows: *overpowers*

372 solicited: *moved*; *cf. n.*

378 quarry: *heap of slain
slaughter (?)*; *cf. n.*

371 occurrents: *incidents*

374 flights: *troops*

cries on havoc: *proclaims merciless*

He never gave commandment for their death.
 But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
 You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
 Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies
 High on a stage be placed to the view; 392
 And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
 How these things came about: so shall you hear
 Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
 Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters; 396
 Of deaths put on by cunning and forc'd cause,
 And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
 Fall'n on the inventors' heads; all this can I
 Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it, 400
 And call the noblest to the audience.
 For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune;
 I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
 Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me. 404

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
 And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:
 But let this same be presently perform'd,
 Even while men's minds are wild, lest more mis-
 chance 408
 On plots and errors happen.

Fort. Let four captains
 Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
 For he was likely, had he been put on,
 To have prov'd most royally: and, for his pas-
 sage, 412
 The soldiers' music and the rites of war
 Speak loudly for him.

392 stage: *platform*
 397 forc'd: *unreal*
 406 draw on more: *be seconded by others*
 411 been put on: *been put to the proof, tried*
 396 casual: *unpremeditated*
 403 rights of memory: *ancient claims*

Take up the bodies: such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

417

*Exeunt marching, after the which, a peal of
ordnance are shot off.*

NOTES

Dramatis Personæ. A list of characters was first given in the Quarto of 1676, although it is commonly stated that Rowe's edition of 1709 contained the first list.

I. i. 3. *Long . . . king!* The pass-word or reply to the sentry's challenge.

I. i. 15. *Friends . . . Dane.* Probably the officers' pass-word.

I. i. 19. *piece.* A humorous expression equivalent to 'something like him,' or possibly Horatio means to imply that, because of his skepticism, he is with them in bodily form but not in intellectual sympathy. (Chambers.)

I. i. 37. *his.* Regularly used for 'its.' The latter form had not yet come into common use.

I. i. 42. *scholar.* Exorcisms of evil spirits were performed in Latin and hence by scholars.

I. i. 45. *It . . . to.* It was believed that a ghost could not speak until spoken to.

I. i. 63. *sledded Polacks.* Various suggestions have been made concerning the meaning of these words for the reason that the second Quarto and first Folio have 'sleaded (F1 sledded) pollax' which conceivably could mean a poleaxe weighted with a sledge or hammer at the back. When, however, later references in the play to Polacks are taken into consideration, the meaning given in the gloss seems the more probable.

I. i. 70. *Good now.* Interjectional expression denoting entreaty.

I. i. 87. *law and heraldry.* The forms of both the common law and the law of arms having been duly

observed. The latter would give the compact binding force in honor. Nobles who signed binding agreements were wont to have their coats of arms added to their signatures.

I. i. 96. *unimproved*. Other conjectures are: 'not turned to account,' 'untutored,' 'undisciplined.'

I. i. 98. *list*. Literally, a special catalogue of the soldiers of a force; here used in the sense of an indiscriminately chosen crowd.

I. i. 99. *For . . . diet*. For no pay but their keep. (Moberly.) Perhaps, however, the meaning is 'as food and diet to keep the enterprise going.'

I. i. 100. *stomach*. I.e., gives an opportunity for courage. With a quibble on the literal meaning.

I. i. 117. *As . . . blood*. The abruptness of the transition in the sense has led some commentators to believe either (1) that there is a line missing, or (2) that ll. 121-125 should be inserted between ll. 116 and 117. Attempts have also been made to emend the text by adding a conjectural line.

I. i. 118. *Disasters*. In North's Plutarch, Julius Cæsar, whence Shakespeare drew his account of the strange omens preceding Cæsar's assassination, the sun was said to be darkened.

I. i. 120. *sick . . . doomsday*. A reference to the Biblical account of the events to occur at the second coming of the Son of Man. Cf. Matthew 24. 29 and Revelation 6. 12.

I. i. 125. *climatures*. Possibly used for those who live under the same climate. (Clarendon.)

I. i. 127. *cross*. The usual interpretation has been to accept this as meaning crossing the spot where an apparition had appeared, and thus subjecting Horatio, according to traditional ghost-lore, to the spectre's malignant influence. This explanation is rejected by Onions, who gives the reading of the gloss.

I. i. 136. *uphoarded*. If while alive a person

had hidden gold and placed it under a charm, it was necessary, for his soul's quiet, to release it from the spell. (Illustrated by Steevens from Dekker's *Knight's Conjuring*.)

I. i. 140. *partisan*. A long-handled spear with a blade having one or more lateral cutting projections.

I. i. 150. *cock*. It was a tradition that at cock-crow spirits returned to their confines.

I. i. 162. *planets strike*. The malignant aspects of planets, according to the pseudo-science of astrology, were supposed to be able to injure incautious travellers by night.

I. ii. 65. *kin . . . kind*. I.e., more than his actual kinship and less than a natural relation. 'Kind' is here used equivocally for 'natural' and also for 'affectionate.' A proverbial expression occurring elsewhere in Elizabethan literature.

I. ii. 67. *i' the sun*. Probably Hamlet means he is too much in the unwelcome sunshine of the King's favor. The reply is purposely enigmatical. There is a quibble on 'sun' and 'son.'

I. ii. 113. *Wittenberg*. A famous German university, founded in 1502.

I. ii. 140. *Hyperion*. The Titanic sun god, but here used for Apollo.

I. ii. 149. *Niobe*. A daughter of Tantalus, who boasted that she had more sons and daughters than Leto. Consequently Apollo and Artemis slew her children with arrows, and she herself was turned by Zeus into a stone upon Mount Sipylus in Lydia, where she shed tears all the summer long.

I. ii. 161. *forget myself*. I.e., or I have lost the knowledge even of myself.

I. ii. 180. *bak'd meats*. It was an old custom to have a feast as part of the funeral ceremonies.

I. ii. 198. *vast*. It here means emptiness, the time when no living thing was seen.

I. iii. 7. *violet*. Early violets were proverbial examples of transitory things.

I. iii. 26. *place*. The reading of the first Folio is 'peculiar Sect and force.'

I. iii. 53. *double*. I.e., because Laertes had already taken leave of his father.

I. iii. 56. *wind . . . of*. Wind blowing from a stern quarter, hence 'behind,' 'favorable.'

I. iii. 58. *precepts*. Many parallels for several of these precepts have been discovered.

I. iii. 74. *Are . . . that*. Various conjectures have been suggested: 'are most select and generous in that' (White); 'select and generous, are most choice in that' (Steevens); 'are most select and generous, chiefly in that.' The emendation of the text here followed is that commonly accepted.

I. iii. 99. *tenders*. Polonius, in l. 106, uses 'tenders' in the sense of promises to pay, which, as he says, are not 'legal currency.'

I. iii. 115. *woodcocks*. The woodcock was supposed to be a witless bird easily snared.

I. iv. 36. *dram of eale*. Possibly 'eale' is a corruption of 'e'il,' the contracted form of 'evil.' The rest of the passage is equally uncertain. The *Cambridge Shakespeare* records about forty conjectures. Dowden's conjecture seems to come nearest to the sense of the passage; 'out of a mere doubt or suspicion the dram of evil degrades in reputation all the noble substance to its own [substance].'

I. iv. 83. *Nemean lion's*. One of the powerful monsters slain by Hercules.

I. v. 21. *blazon*. Literally, to portray armorial bearings in their proper colors.

I. v. 32. *fat weed*. It has been suggested that Shakespeare meant by this the asphodel referred to by Lucian in connection with Lethe. However, there is a reference in Seneca's *Hercules Furens* to the *Taxus* tree overleaning the quiet lake of Lethe. This

is the Latin name for the yew tree, which exudes a resinous substance from its leaves. It could, therefore, be described as a 'fat weed.'

I. v. 33. *Lethe*. A river (sometimes called a lake) of the Greek underworld, whose waters gave forgetfulness of the past to those who drank of them.

I. v. 67. *gates and alleys*. Shakespeare here implies as much as was then known touching the circulation of the blood. (Hudson.)

I. v. 80. *horrible*. The tradition of the stage assigns this line to Hamlet. It was so spoken by, among others, Garrick, Kemble, and Irving. Betterton probably omitted it, for it is marked for omission in the Quarto of 1676.

I. v. 136. *Saint Patrick*. He was the keeper of purgatory; the patron saint of all blunders and confusion (Moberly); he banished serpents from Ireland, hence he was the proper saint to take cognizance of the report that a serpent stung Hamlet's father. (Dowden.) If Hamlet's oath requires any explanation, the first surmise appears the more probable.

I. v. 138. *honest ghost*. I.e., an actual ghost, and not the devil or an evil spirit in disguise. Cf. Hamlet's doubt upon this point later.

I. v. 154. *sword*. It was customary to swear upon the sword, because the hilt made the form of the cross. Such an oath was binding both in military honor and in religion.

I. v. 167. *your*. Does not mean Horatio's philosophy, but refers to philosophy in general.

II. i. 35. *Of general assault*. Chambers plausibly suggests that the meaning may be 'a passionate desire to assail all kinds of experience.'

II. i. 119. *More . . . love*. The line is obscure, but Hudson paraphrases it as follows: 'By keeping Hamlet's love secret we may cause more of grief to others than of hatred on his part by disclosing it.'

II. ii. 79. *regards . . . allowance.* I.e., terms securing the safety of the country and regulating the passage of troops through it. (Clarendon.)

II. ii. 123. *machine.* Such endings were not uncommon in Euphuistic letters.

II. ii. 174. *fishmonger.* The word is probably used here in some cant coarse sense, such as 'wencher' or 'seller of women's chastity.'

II. ii. 184. *good kissing.* I.e., carrion fit for kissing by the sun. Warburton suggested the emendation 'God kissing carrion' but there appears no necessity for accepting this.

II. ii. 187. *conception.* There is a quibble here on conception as 'understanding' and as 'the state of being pregnant.'

II. ii. 198. *Between who?* Hamlet deliberately misunderstands 'matter' to mean a cause of dispute.

II. ii. 204. *amber . . . gum.* I.e., in reference to the exudings from the weak eyes of old men.

II. ii. 237. *on . . . button.* I.e., we have not reached the summit of good fortune.

II. ii. 244. *strumpet.* I.e., because of Fortune's fickleness.

II. ii. 274. *beggars bodies.* I.e., if ambition is but a shadow, then monarchs and heroes, who have attained ambition, are in possession only of a shadow; whereas beggars, who have not attained ambition, at least possess something material—i.e., their bodies. But every beggar may long for ambition—a shadow—and hence the monarchs and heroes who are in possession of their ambitions, are but the beggars' shadows—i.e., have this shadow for which the beggar longs in vain.

II. ii. 288. *dear a halfpenny.* Too dear at a halfpenny, of insignificant value.

II. ii. 328. *quintessence.* A term in alchemy. The fifth essence of ancient and mediæval philosophy, supposed to be the substance of which the heavenly bodies

were composed, and to be actually latent in all things: hence, pure essence or extract, essential part of a thing. (Murray.)

II. ii. 346. *tickle o' the sere*. Literally, the 'sere' is the catch of a gunlock that holds the hammer. Hence a trigger that goes off at a light touch. (Nicholson.)

II. ii. 356. *innovation*. This speech does not appear in the Quarto of 1603 but does in the Quarto of 1604. There are two conjectures as to the meaning: (1) On January 30, 1603-4, a license was granted to the children of the Revels to play at the Blackfriars Theatre and elsewhere; (2) or, it refers to the custom of introducing personal abuse into plays. Either might be described as an 'innovation.'

II. ii. 362. *aery*. This refers to the young choristers of the Chapel Royal [and of St. Paul's] who acted plays.

II. ii. 363. *cry . . . question*. This is also interpreted as meaning 'exclaim against (lampoon) those who are at the top of their profession, (or, the best productions of the dramatic pen).'

II. ii. 386. *Hercules and his load*. The reference may be to the sign of the Globe Theatre which represented Hercules carrying the globe. The sign itself was an allusion to the story of Hercules relieving Atlas.

II. ii. 407. *handsaw*. The phrase is proverbial. It has been conjectured that handsaw is a corruption of 'her(o)nsew,' 'her(o)nshaw'—a heron or hern. It is probable, however, that Hamlet uses the corrupted form in its derived sense of being able to recognize two dissimilar objects.

II. ii. 419. *Roscius*. A famous Roman actor whose intellectual capacities lifted him above the stigma usually attached to his profession.

II. ii. 427. *scene individable*. Probably a play which follows the classical rules relating to the three

unities of time, place, and action—hence usually a tragedy. Cf. note on Seneca below.

II. ii. 428. *poem unlimited*. Probably a play which disregarded the unities; or, a comedy in which unlimited license was used in treating the material. Cf. note on Plautus below.

II. ii. 428. *Seneca*. A Roman rhetorical writer of tragedies whose plays were during the Renaissance considered models of classic technique. See Appendix A for notes on Senecan influence in Hamlet.

II. ii. 429. *Plautus*. A Roman comic dramatist who was the model for comedy technique during the Renaissance. Cf. *The Comedy of Errors*.

II. ii. 429. *law of writ and the liberty*. There are two conjectures as to the meaning: (1) 'law of writ,' plays written according to the classical rules; and 'liberty,' plays which do not follow these rules; (2) adhering to the text, hence, 'law of writ'; 'liberty,' plays in which the dialogue was extemporized by the actors, as in the Italian *commedia dell' arte*. This editor believes 'law of writ' to refer to 'tragedy,' (cf. scene indivisible); 'liberty' to refer to 'comedy,' (cf. poem unlimited).

II. ii. 431. *Jephthah*. There were several old ballads on this subject. Cf. Percy's *Reliques*, 2d. ed., 1757, for a copy of one of the ballads.

II. ii. 457. *Cracked . . . ring*. Having the circle broken that surrounds the sovereign's head on a coin. Here used quibblingly for a voice that has changed and hence is 'cracked' in its 'ring' or purity of tone. It is, of course, a boy actor of women's parts that Hamlet is addressing.

II. ii. 466. *Caviare . . . general*. I.e., a delicacy for which the general public has no relish.

II. ii. 469. *digested*. Cf. the Prologue to *Troilus and Cressida*, 23-29.

II. ii. 471. *no sallets . . . savoury*. No ribaldry to spice the lines.

II. ii. 475. *handsome*. I.e., its beauty was not that of elaborate diction or polish, but that of structure and proportion.

II. ii. 477. *Æneas' tale to Dido*. The passage inserted here should be compared with Marlowe and Nash's *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (1594), II. 1. 214 ff. It is a matter of critical dispute whether Shakespeare intended this passage as burlesque or whether he selected deliberately the earlier turgid romantic style to contrast with his more realistic dramatic method in this scene. The latter seems the more probable.

II. ii. 481. *Hyrceanian beast*. The tiger. So described by Virgil. Cf. *Æneid*, IV. 366.

II. ii. 485. *ominous horse*. The wooden horse in which the Greeks lay hidden until the Trojans dragged it within the walls.

II. ii. 532. *Hecuba*. The wife of Priam.

II. ii. 533. *mobled*. The first Folio has 'inobled,' which is probably a misprint. 'Mobled' is a debased form of 'muffled.' It is clearly Shakespeare's intention to make use of an unusual word here, as may be seen by Hamlet's query and Polonius' approval.

II. ii. 561. *God's bodikins*. A corruption of an oath 'by God's body.'

II. ii. 573. *dozen or sixteen lines*. There has been much discussion concerning the possibility of identifying the passage written by Hamlet. Chambers (*Warwick Shakespeare*) suggests Lucianus' speech, III. ii. 270 ff., which is interrupted by the King's rising. Others point to the Player King's speech, III. ii. 198 ff., because its philosophy is characteristic of Hamlet. The question is not one to which an authoritative answer can be given.

II. ii. 595. *cue*. A technical stage term for the last words of an actor's line to which another actor replied.

II. ii. 603. *John-a-dreams*. Armin's *Nest of Ninnies* (1608) contains the following definition: "His

name is Iohne, indeede, saies the cinick; but neither Iohn-a-nods, nor Iohn-a-dreames, yet either as you take Itt."

II. ii. 605. *property*. His crown, his wife, everything, in short, which he might be said to be possessed of, except his life. (Furness.)

II. ii. 613. *pigeon-liver'd*. It was believed that pigeons were gentle because they had no gall.

III. i. 59. *take . . . troubles*. Many commentators have felt that this line contains a badly mixed metaphor and consequently have suggested various unnecessary emendations. The phrase 'sea of troubles,' in the sense of a 'mass of troubles,' however, occurs elsewhere in Elizabethan literature. Cf. Greene's *Mamillia*, ed. Grosart, vol. II., p. 18; "hauing himself escaped the seas of trouble and care," and Dekker's *The Wonder of a Kingdome*, ed. 1873, vol. IV., p. 230:

I never heard mongst all your Romane spirits,
That any held so bravely up his head,
In such a sea of troubles (that come rouling
One on anothers necke) as Lotti doth.

III. i. 153. *nickname*. I.e., by painting your face and by your fashionable affectations you turn human beings (God's creatures) into figures that bear the same resemblance to reality that a nickname does to a Christian name. Or possibly this is an allusion to the Elizabethan court fashion of giving animal names to the various courtiers.

III. ii. 12. *groundlings*. The inferior portion of the audience who paid a penny for standing room in the yard or pit.

III. ii. 14. *inexplicable dumb-shows*. Pantomimes illustrating the subsequent action of the play, often so crudely performed that they were 'inexplicable.'

III. ii. 16. *Termagant*. A noisy character repre-

senting a supposed god of the Saracens in some of the mystery plays.

III. ii. 16. *out-herods*. I.e., outdoes even the extravagant acting of the character of Herod in the mystery plays. Cf. the stage direction in the Coventry play of *The Nativity*, "Here Erode ragis in the pagond, and in the strete also."

III. ii. 45. *there be of them*, etc. Examples of gags and stage business introduced by clowns are found in *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, V:

"if thou canst but drawe thy mouth awrye, laye thy legg over thy staffe, sawe a piece of cheese asunder with thy dagger, lape up drinke on the earth, I warrant thee theile laughe mightilie."

III. ii. 89. *Vulcan*. He was the armorer of the gods.

III. ii. 95. *be idle*. This may have its usual meanings of 'purposeless,' 'intent upon nothing in particular.' So in *King Lear*, I. iii. 17. However, in Hall's *Chronicles*, the phrase 'ydle and weak in his wit' occurs.

III. ii. 98. *chameleon's dish*. It was believed that chameleons fed on air.

III. ii. 109. *Julius Cæsar*. The universities gave many representations within their walls of plays in Latin and English. A Latin play on Cæsar's death was acted at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1582. Cf. also the title-page of the 1603 Quarto of *Hamlet*.

III. ii. 110. *Capitol*. The murder of Cæsar actually took place in the Theatre of Pompey, which stood in the Campus Martius. Shakespeare transfers the scene to the Capitol both in *Julius Cæsar* and in *Antony and Cleopatra*.

III. ii. 144. *hobby-horse*. In the morris dance, a figure of a horse made of light material and fastened around the waist of a performer, who went through various antics. The quotation here may be from a

ballad perhaps satirizing Puritan opposition to May-games.

III. ii. 146. S. d. *The dumb-show enters.* In *Gorboduc* and many early plays a 'dumb-show' was introduced to give a pantomimic representation or suggestion of the action that was to follow.

III. ii. 148. *niching mallecho.* Mallecho is from the Spanish malhecho, meaning 'mischief.'

III. ii. 168. *Tellus*'. The goddess of the earth, who received and nourished the sown seed.

III. ii. 229. *sport and repose.* Here the objects of the verb.

III. ii. 252. *duke's name.* In the first Quarto the leading characters are called Duke and Duchess. In the second Quarto and the First Folio, except for this line, they are always King and Queen. In revising his play, Shakespeare overlooked this instance.

III. ii. 260. *interpret.* At 'puppet shows' or 'motions' the dialogue was spoken by a person concealed behind the stage. This was called 'interpreting.'

III. ii. 268. *The croaking . . . revenge.* Cf. *The True Tragedie of Richard the Third* (p. 61, Shake. Soc. reprint):

The screeking raven sits croking for revenge,
Whole herds of beasts come bellowing for revenge.

III. ii. 273. *Hecate.* Diana, in her aspect as infernal goddess, was regarded as the queen of witches.

III. ii. 282. *false fire.* A proverbial expression.

III. ii. 287. *deer go weep.* It was a popular belief that the deer, when badly wounded, retires from the herd and goes apart to weep and die.

III. ii. 293. *Provincial roses.* So called either from Provence, or from Provins, the latter a town forty miles from Paris.

III. ii. 294. *cry.* Literally, a 'pack of hounds'—here, troop or company.

III. ii. 295. *share*. Theatrical companies were organized on a profit-sharing basis.

III. ii. 297. *Damon*. An allusion to the classical story of the friendship of Damon and Pythias (or Phintias).

III. ii. 300. *pajock*. Various conjectures, but in Scotland a peacock is often called a "peajock." Skeat, however, derives 'pajock' from 'patch,' a 'pied fool.' Spenser calls a ragamuffin a 'patchocke.'

III. ii. 317. *distempered*. This word was used both of mental and of bodily disorder. Hamlet pretends to understand it in the latter sense.

III. ii. 320. *choler*. The other meaning of 'choler' is bilious disorder, and so again Hamlet pretends to misunderstand it.

III. ii. 323. *purgation*. Another word of double meaning: (1) clearing from the accusation or suspicion of guilt; (2) purging in the medical sense.

III. ii. 355. *pickers and stealers*. An allusion to the phrase in the Catechism, "Keep my hands from picking and stealing."

III. ii. 365. '*While . . . grows.*' A proverb of frequent occurrence. Cf. Heywood's *Proverbs* "while the grass groweth the horse sterveth," and Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra* (1578), "Whylst grass doth growe, oft sterves the seely steede."

III. ii. 368. *recover the wind of*. A hunting term, meaning, keep watch upon (as upon the game, when following it down the wind).

III. ii. 395. *fret*. Frets are stops of instruments of the lute or guitar kind. Hamlet also uses it quibblingly to mean 'annoy.'

III. ii. 409. *bent*. An expression derived from archery; the bow has its 'bent' when it is drawn as far as it can be.

III. ii. 419. *Nero*. He murdered his mother, Agrippina.

III. iii. 37. *primal*. The curse of Cain. Cf. Genesis 4. 2.

III. iii. 61. *lies*. Is sustainable, as an action at law.

III. iii. 80. *full of bread*. Cf. Ezekiel 16. 49.

III. iv. 67. *moor*. With a quibble upon the meaning 'swarthy complexioned.'

III. iv. 98. *vice*. The Vice was a stock character in the Moralities. Although personifying the weaker side of human nature, he was represented as a buffoon and supplied much of the comic element in these plays.

III. iv. 102. *shreds and patches*. The usual interpretation is to assume that this refers to the motley dress of the Vice (cf. 'patch' = a 'pied fool'), but it may conceivably refer to the subjects the King rules, although no commentator gives authority for this assumption.

III. iv. 169. *master*. A word has dropped out of the earlier texts, and the present emendation 'master' is derived from the fourth Folio.

III. iv. 207. *go hard But*. Introduces a statement of what will happen unless overwhelming difficulties prevent it.

IV. i. 40. *so, haply, slander*. Added by Capell.

IV. ii. 29. *The . . . body*. A passage about which there have been many conjectures. If Hamlet is not designedly talking mere nonsense, a possible interpretation is: "The King is still alive (i.e., with *his* body), but he is not with the dead body (i.e., of Polonius)."

IV. iii. 21. *convocation*. The commentators maintain that this is an allusion to the famous Diet or convocation of the dignitaries of the German Empire held at Worms in 1521. It was before this Diet that Martin Luther was summoned to appear. There is no necessity of putting this far-fetched interpretation upon this passage. In John Wyclif's *The Ave Maria*,

ed. E. E. T. S., p. 206, occurs: "the rotten body [of man] that is worms' meat."

IV. v. S. d. Here the first Folio omits the Gentleman, no doubt, as Collier suggested, to avoid the employment of another actor.

IV. v. 20., S. d. The direction in the Quarto of 1603 is, "Enter Ofelia playing on a lute, and her haire downe, singing." This is the basis for the traditional stage-business.

IV. v. 25. *cockle hat*. The cockle hat, staff, and sandals were the guise of a pilgrim and often the disguise of a lover. Cf. Romeo's costume at the ball in *Romeo and Juliet*. The hat was so called from the custom of putting cockle-shells upon pilgrims' hats. The shell was used to denote that the pilgrim had been to the shrine of St. James of Compostella in Spain.

IV. v. 42. *owl . . . daughter*. There is an old mediæval legend that a baker's daughter was turned into an owl for refusing bread to our Lord.

IV. v. 97. *Switzers*. The kings of France employed Swiss mercenaries as guards, and the term 'Switzer' gradually became almost synonymous with 'guard.'

IV. v. 141. *swoopstake*. A gambling term used when the winner clears the board of all the stakes.

IV. v. 145. *life-rendering pelican*. It was a common belief that the pelican either fed its young or restored them to life when dead with its own blood. It was thus an emblem of self-sacrifice.

IV. v. 164. *Hey non nonny*. Such meaningless refrains are common in old songs. Cf. 169, 'a-down.'

IV. v. 171. *wheel*. Although this word is usually rendered 'burden,' 'refrain,' it is possible that Ophelia is referring to singing at the spinning wheel.

IV. v. 171. *false steward*. This ballad or story is unknown at the present day.

IV. v. 174. *rosemary*. Flower symbolism was an elaborate system in mediæval and Elizabethan England. Cf. *The Handfull of Pleasant Delights* (1584):

Rosemarie is for remembrance,
betweene vs daie and night:
Wishing that I might alwaies haue
you present in my sight.

Rosemary was also often strewn on biers. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. v. 79; *Winter's Tale*, IV. iii. 74.

IV. v. 176. *pansies*. French, *pensées*; a country emblem of love and courtship.

IV. v. 180. *rue*. It was usually mingled with holy water and then known as 'herb of grace.' Hence "we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays." Wormwood, the emblem of remorse, was likewise called herb of grace.

IV. v. 182. *difference*. An heraldic bearing, distinguishing the arms of one branch of the same family from another. Ophelia implies that for the Queen *rue* signifies the remembrance of things to be repented, for herself—regret. Thus the "difference."

IV. v. 186. *For . . . joy*. The music for this song is contained in Anthony Holborne's *Citharn Schoole* (1597). It is probably a Robin Hood ballad now lost.

IV. v. 189. *And . . . again*. This song appears under the titles: *The Merry Milkmaids* and *The Milkmaids' Dumps*.

IV. vii. 20. *spring*. There are several springs in England whose water is so heavily charged with lime that they will petrify with a deposit of lime any object placed in them. There is one at King's Newnham in Warwickshire and another at Knaresborough in Yorkshire.

IV. vii. 21. *gyves*. I.e., would turn punishments inflicted upon Hamlet into proofs of his good qualities.

IV. vii. 23. *reverted*. I.e., the 'loud wind' of

popular affection for Hamlet would have caused Claudius' shafts to recoil upon himself.

IV. vii. 27. *praises . . . again.* I.e., if praises may return to what is now no more—viz., Ophelia's natural charm.

IV. vii. 28. *challenger on mount.* I.e., her worth challenged all the age to deny her perfection. 'Of all the age' qualifies 'challenger,' not 'mount.'

IV. vii. 40. *Claudio.* A character who does not appear in the play.

IV. vii. 76. *siege.* Literally 'seat,' thence 'rank,' because people sat at table in order of precedence.

IV. vii. 87. *incorps'd and demi-natur'd.* I.e., like a Centaur, half horse, half man. Literally, of one body with and half partaking of the nature of his horse.

IV. vii. 89. *in . . . tricks.* I.e., I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he could perform.

IV. vii. 96. *masterly report.* I.e., a report describing Laertes as a master of fence.

IV. vii. 112. *passages of proof.* I.e., instances from practical experience of the world.

IV. vii. 117. *plurisy.* Often used where today one would say 'plethora.'

IV. vii. 122. *spendthrift sigh.* A satisfactory paraphrase has not as yet been suggested. The meaning is probably: "the recognition of a 'should' when it is too late is like a wasteful or supererogatory sigh, which pains even while giving relief." The difficulty lies in the adjectival use of 'spendthrift.'

IV. vii. 138. *pass of practice.* It may mean either (1) a treacherous thrust, or (2) a thrust in which you are practised. The former is more probable.

IV. vii. 141. *mountebank.* These men were quack-doctors who journeyed from town to town selling miraculous remedies and forbidden poisons.

IV. vii. 145. *moon*. It was believed that to gather herbs by moonlight added to their medicinal value. It is possible, however, that here the meaning is simply 'on earth.'

IV. vii. 155. *cunnings*. The first Folio reads *commings*, possibly fencing bouts. Cf. Cotgrave: *Venuë*—a comming; also, a vennie in fencing.

IV. vii. 170. *crow-flowers*. It is probable that Shakespeare is still carrying on his flower symbolism in the garlands worn by Ophelia. Thus the crow-flower was also called 'the fair maid of France'; long purples were said to represent the cold hand of death; nettles meant 'stung to the quick'; and the daisy sometimes imported 'pure virginity' or 'spring of life.' (Parkinson.)

IV. vii. 190. *woman*. I.e., when these tears are shed the woman in me, what I have inherited from my mother, will have come out.

V. i. S. d. *Clowns*. The term applies both to peasants and to actors of low comedy rôles. In stage directions it usually means the latter.

V. i. 9. *se offendendo*. The clown's mistake for *se defendendo*, which would itself be a mistake, since this was the verdict in the case of justifiable homicide.

V. i. 37. *bore arms*. A quibble on bearing a coat of arms and the literal meaning.

V. i. 44. *confess thyself*. Half of an old proverb. The rest was 'and be hanged.' Or possibly 'confess thyself a fool.'

V. i. 59. *unyoke*. Literally, 'you may then free your cattle from the yoke'; hence, 'your day's work is done.'

V. i. 68. *Yaughan*. Some ale-house is probably intended, perhaps the one attached to the Globe theatre. The name is Welsh and, therefore, is not necessarily a corruption of the German, 'Johann,' as has been suggested by some commentators.

V. i. 69. *In . . . love.* This song, by Lord Vaux, is found in Tottel's *Miscellany* (1557), p. 173, under the title *The aged louer renounceth loue*, although the Clown sings a confused and blundering version of it.

V. i. 75. *property of easiness.* I.e., custom has made it natural to him to take his task easily.

V. i. 101. *loggats.* A game in which thick sticks are thrown to lie as near as possible to a stake fixed in the ground or to a block of wood on a floor.

V. i. 108. *tenures.* The act, right, or manner of holding, as real estate, property of a superior; manner in, or period for, which anything is had and enjoyed.

V. i. 111. *action of battery.* Right to sue for an unlawful attack by beating and wounding.

V. i. 113. *recognizances.* Bonds or obligations of record testifying the recognizor to owe to the recognizee a certain sum of money.

V. i. 113. *statutes.* Particular modes of recognizance or acknowledgement for securing debts, which thereby became a charge upon the party's land. (Ritson.)

V. i. 114. *vouchers.* Persons who are called upon to warrant a tenant's title.

V. i. 116. *finés, recoveries.* Processes by which entailed estates were commonly transferred from one party to another.

V. i. 120. *conveyance.* Document by which transference of property is effected.

V. i. 127. *assurance.* Also used with quibble on its legal meaning 'evidence of the conveyance or settlement of property.'

V. i. 150. *by the card.* There are two conjectures as to the original meaning: (1) that 'card' refers to the card on which the thirty-two points of the mariner's compass are marked, hence 'precision'; (2) that it alludes to the 'card' or 'calender' of etiquette. Cf. Osric's use of the word.

V. i. 256. *crants*. Garlands appear to have been borne before the bodies of unmarried women to the grave, and were hung up in church.

V. i. 277. *Pelion*. Pelion, Olympus, and Ossa (l. 305) are three mountains in the north of Thessaly. The Titans, warring with the gods, are said to have attempted to pile Ossa on Pelion in an effort to scale Olympus.

V. i. 300. *eisel*. Some commentators have taken this word for the name of a river, but there seems no plausible basis for such an interpretation. Cf. *The Salisbury Primer* (1555): "I beseech thee for the bitterness of the aysell and gall that thou tasted."

V. i. 308. *This . . . drooping*. The first Folio assigns this speech to the King.

V. i. 311. *golden couplets*. The dove lays but two eggs and the young, when first disclosed, are covered with a yellow down. Cf. III. i. 174.

V. ii. 13. *sea-gown*. "A coarse, high-collared and short-sleeved gown, reaching down to the mid leg, and used most by seamen and sailors." (Onions.)

V. ii. 22. *bugs . . . life*. I.e., with such enumeration of bugbears and imaginary terrors if Hamlet were allowed his life.

V. ii. 30. *prologue . . . play*. I.e., before I had formed my real plan, my brains had done their work.

V. ii. 42. *comma*. There have been many conjectures, but the meaning of the text appears obvious as it stands.

V. ii. 43. *'As'es*. A quibble on 'as,' the conditional particle, and 'ass,' the beast of burden.

V. ii. 65. *election*. The Danish throne was elective.

V. ii. 84. *water-fly*. Used for a vain or idly busy person, but probably also with reference to the gaudy attire of the foolish courtier.

V. ii. 90. *mess*. "One of the groups of persons,

normally four, into which the company at a banquet was divided." (Onions.)

V. ii. 90. *chough*. This word also meant, sometimes, a provincial boor—but it is hardly likely that a "water-fly" whose crib stood at the King's mess was a mere provincial boor, nor does Osric's affected courtier speech correspond to this description. Cf. also 193, 'lapwing.' Nevertheless, many commentators so interpret it.

V. ii. 109. *remember*. The phrase 'remember thy courtesy' was a conventional one for 'be covered.' Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, V. i. 106.

V. ii. 110. *mine ease*. This again was the conventional apologetic reply for declining the invitation of 'remember thy courtesy.'

V. ii. 121. *yaw*. Nautical figure; the literal meaning is difficult to define precisely, but the sense of the line appears to be 'and yet but stagger in the attempt to overtake his perfections.' Osric is himself puzzled as Hamlet intended he should be.

V. ii. 132. *another tongue*. I.e., in plain language, instead of in this affected courtier speech.

V. ii. 174. *twelve for nine*. The exact details of this wager are a matter of doubt. The meaning probably is that in every dozen passes Laertes will not score more than twelve hits to Hamlet's nine. It might, therefore, take twenty-one passes to decide this.

V. ii. 193. *lapwing*. It was said when newly hatched to run about with the shell on its head.

V. ii. 201. *fond and winnowed*. This phrase has not been satisfactorily explained. The metaphor is a mixed one. "Fond" means "foolish," and "winnowed," according to Craig, "sensible." That is, this "yesty collection" gives the appearance of being able to range through all shades of opinions from foolish to wise, but subject them to a real test and "the bubbles are out."

V. ii. 258. *satisfied in nature.* Though his natural tendency is to be satisfied with Hamlet's explanation, yet his artificial honor as a courtier requires that the matter shall be adjudicated.

V. ii. 269. *foil.* That which sets something off to advantage, with a quibble on the meaning 'fencing foil.'

V. ii. 277. *better'd.* Some commentators take this to mean 'stands higher in reputation.'

V. ii. 283. *quit.* I.e., requite Laertes' winning of the first two bouts by gaining the third.

V. ii. 316. S. d. The usual method of representing upon the stage this exchange of rapiers is as follows: With a quick thrust Hamlet disarms Laertes. As the foil drops, Hamlet places his foot upon it, and, with a bow, offers Laertes his own in exchange. Courtesy compels Laertes to accept this, after which Hamlet stoops, picks up Laertes' foil from the ground, and resumes the bout.

V. ii. 355. *Roman.* It was a Roman custom to follow masters in death.

V. ii. 372. *solicited.* The sentence is left unfinished.

V. ii. 378. *cries on havoc.* Originally, to give an army the order 'havoc!' as the signal for pillaging.

APPENDIX A

SOURCES OF THE PLAY

There are two early references to the name 'Hamlet,' one in *The Annals of Ireland by the Four Masters*,¹ under the year 917, and the other in Snorri's *Prose Edda*, about three centuries later. The outline of the story of Hamlet, as we are familiar with it, is first found in the *Historia Danica* of Saxo Grammaticus, a Danish chronicler who lived at the end of the twelfth century.

Saxo's version contains the following elements in common with Shakespeare's: the murder of Hamlet's father by the latter's ambitious brother; the mother's incestuous marriage with the murderer; the son's feigned madness, or "folly," for the purpose of carrying out his revenge; a foreshadowing of the character of Ophelia by the girl thrown in Hamlet's way that the true state of his mind may be discovered; a foreshadowing of the character of Polonius; the scene between mother and son;² the voyage to England with two companions, during which Hamlet alters the letter, and the companions are put to death in his stead; Hamlet's return to kill his uncle, a deed which he accomplishes. The ending differs.

François de Belle-Forest published in 1570 a free translation of Saxo's Hamlet story in French prose in the fifth book of his *Histoires Tragiques*. Although many editions of this appeared in France before 1600, there is no evidence of an English version before the publication by Thomas Pavier of the *Hystorie of*

¹ Cf. the Introduction to Gollancz's *Hamlet in Iceland*.

² Cf. *Hamlet*, III. iv.

Hamlet in 1608. This English translation differs in a few particulars from Belle-Forest, and these differences seem to be due to the influence of Shakespeare's play. Thus, in Belle-Forest the counsellor who acts the spy during Amleth's (Hamlet's) interview with his mother, conceals himself under a bed-quilt, upon which Amleth leaps when entering the room and so discovers the eavesdropper. In the *Hystorie*, the counsellor hides behind the arras, as in the play. Again, Hamblet, at the moment of this discovery, calls out "A rat! A rat!", of which there is no trace in Belle-Forest.

There is one other conjectural source for Shakespeare's play, *viz.*, an earlier play by another author on the same subject. The evidence for the existence of such a work is as follows: In 1589 was published Greene's *Menaphon* with a prefatory epistle by Thomas Nash "to the Gentlemen Students of both Vniuersities." In this epistle, Nash briefly reviews contemporary literature and refers to "whole Hamlets, I should say Handfulls of tragical speeches," linking this remark with a reference to Seneca.

The next reference to an early play of Hamlet is from the *Diary* of Philip Henslowe,¹ the theatrical manager, for the year 1594.

"Ye 9 of June 1594. R[ecieve]d. at hamlet, viijs". At this time the Lord Chamberlain's and the Lord Admiral's men were playing for Henslowe at the theatre at Newington Butts. The former company was the one to which Shakespeare belonged.

Lodge's *Wit's miserie, and the World's madness*, published in 1596, contains this passage: "[Hate Virtue is] a foul lubber, and looks as pale as the wisard of the ghost, which cried so miserably at the theator, like an oyster-wife, *Hamlet reuenge.*"

¹ The entry differs from those Henslowe made when the play mentioned was a new one.

This cumulative evidence is conclusive of the existence of a play on the subject of Hamlet at an earlier date than any surviving Shakespeare quarto.

The general consensus of opinion is that the earlier play was by Thomas Kyd, the author of the *Spanish Tragedie*. Nash's preface to Greene's *Menaphon*, already alluded to, contains a punning reference to "the Kidde in Aesope's fable." Kyd's known plays show marked Senecan influence.¹ The probability that Kyd was the author of the earlier *Hamlet* is further substantiated by resemblances between the *Spanish Tragedie* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In both the motive is revenge; the ghost of the victim relates his story; the hero feigns madness; in each play there is a faithful friend named Horatio; each contains a play within a play; the innocent and guilty alike are involved in the catastrophes.

Although no actual trace of this earlier play has been found, many scholars believe that a German manuscript, dated October 27, 1710, and published in 1781, preserves some material from the original version. This manuscript is possibly a modernized copy of an older one which was first translated when a troupe of English actors visited Germany at the end of the sixteenth century.² The German play is entitled, *Der Bestrafte Brudermord oder: Prinz Hamlet aus Dänemark*. (*Fratricide Punished, or Prince Hamlet of Denmark*). It opens with an allegorical prologue which shows unmistakable Senecan influence. Likewise Polonius is here called Corambus, which corresponds with his name 'Corambis' in the first Quarto. Otherwise this German play is exceedingly crude and coarse, although the outline

¹ He was also the translator of a Seneca-like tragedy entitled *Cornelia*, by the French tragic writer Garnier.

² On the other hand, the earliest reference known to a performance of *Hamlet* by English actors in Germany is in the year 1626.

of the plot action follows Shakespeare's closely. It is, however, devoid of all literary merit.

To sum up: the story of Hamlet was taken by Belle-Forest from Saxo's chronicle. Shakespeare received it either from Belle-Forest, direct, or from an earlier unknown publication of the translation of Belle-Forest of which the *Hystorie of Hamblet* is a later edition, or he founded his play on an earlier tragedy which was probably by Thomas Kyd. The traces of Senecan influence in Shakespeare's Hamlet are due either to this earlier play or to the general and common influence of Seneca upon Elizabethan tragic playwrights.

APPENDIX B

HISTORY OF THE PLAY

The stage history of *Hamlet* is practically that of the English-speaking stage itself. Almost all the great actors of England and America, from Shakespeare's day to this, have appeared as the Prince. In addition, for the past one hundred years, it has been frequently played in the principal European countries. It is safe to say that no other play of Shakespeare's has been more often performed.

Richard Burbage, the leading actor of Shakespeare's company, was undoubtedly the first Hamlet. From the meagre accounts of his style of acting which have survived, we may infer that, like subsequent great interpreters of the part, he was distinguished for the ease and naturalness of his art.

After the Restoration, Thomas Betterton achieved great fame in this rôle. He was instructed in his interpretation by Sir William Davenant, who had seen the Blackfriars' company act the play. Betterton for the first time introduced scenery into *Hamlet*, and, if we are to trust the Quarto of 1676, established many of the traditions subsequently followed in acting versions.

David Garrick was the leading interpreter of Hamlet during the middle portion of the eighteenth century. He first appeared in the part on November 16, 1734, and continued to play it many times until he left the stage in 1776. Garrick introduced alterations of his own into the text, the chief of which was the omission of the churchyard scene (V. i.), but he was not followed by others in this. The latter years of the eighteenth century saw what many to

this day consider must have been the greatest Hamlet of them all, John Philip Kemble, with his sister, Mrs. Siddons, as Ophelia. Kemble restored the text as written by Shakespeare and abolished the Garrick innovations.

The nineteenth century has witnessed, in England and America, a number of excellent Hamlets, of whom the best remembered are Edmund Kean, Macready, Samuel Phelps, Fechter, Edwin Booth, Sir Henry Irving, Wilson Barrett, Sir Herbert Tree, Martin Harvey, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, and E. H. Sothern. In addition to the list of famous Hamlets, many of the leading actresses have, at one time or another, played Gertrude or Ophelia.

The most artistic and remarkable of the modern productions of *Hamlet* was that designed a few years ago by Gordon Craig for the Art Theatre in Moscow. Nor is there any indication that the popularity of this play upon the stage has dimmed. It still remains the test of the summit of achievement for the art of a tragic actor.

APPENDIX C

THE TEXT

Three versions of *Hamlet* have survived. These are: the Quarto¹ of 1603; the Quarto of 1604; and the text of the First Folio (1623). All three of these texts differ from each other. Modern texts are based upon the Quarto of 1604 and the First Folio.

The Quarto of 1603 offers many perplexing problems. It is a brief² and mutilated text and the order of the scenes varies from that of the two accepted texts. The title-page is as follows:

THE | Tragicall Historie of | HAMLET | *Prince*
of Denmarke | By William Shake-speare. | As it hath
beene diuerse times acted by his Highnesse Ser- |
uants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two V- |
niuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where |
[*Vignette*] | At London printed for N. L. and Iohn
Trundell. | 1603.

It is probable that this text was a pirated edition based upon notes taken in shorthand during a performance at the theatre. The differences, however, in the order of the scenes, the alteration in the conception of Gertrude's character, the almost total omission of the soliloquies, and the less subtle and elaborate dialogue throughout would seem to indicate that *Hamlet* was thoroughly revised before the publication of the second Quarto in 1604. Last of all, as tending to confirm this supposition, is the fact that certain of the characters appear under altered names in the

¹ The text is published in Furness' *Variorum Hamlet*, vol. II.

² It is about half the length of the Quarto of 1604.

later text; Corambis becomes Polonius, and Montano, Reynaldo.¹

The text of the present edition is substantially that of Craig's *Oxford Shakespeare* (Oxford University Press).

The departures from this are of three kinds: (1) the stage directions of the first Folio (1623) or of the second Quarto (1604) have been restored wherever these existed, additional stage directions not found in the two original texts being placed in square brackets; (2) passages or whole lines occurring in the second Quarto, but not in the first Folio, have been enclosed in square brackets; (3) in a few instances a return has been made to the reading of the first Folio when the editor was of the opinion that an emendation of the text was unnecessary.

The following is a list of the alterations of the Craig text under (3), the words of the present text and of the first Folio preceding the colon, those of Craig's text following it. Minor changes of spelling and punctuation have not been noted.

- I. ii. 82 moods: modes
- I. ii. 190 Saw? Who?: Saw who?
- I. ii. 191 The king, my father?: The king, my father!
- I. ii. 200 Arm'd at all points: Armed at points
- I. ii. 216 it: its
- I. iii. 109 Roaming: Running
- I. iii. 130 bonds: bawds
- I. iv. 45 father, royal Dane; O! answer: father; royal Dane, O! answer
- I. iv. 79 wafts: waves
- I. v. 107 My tables, my tables: My tables
- I. v. 133 hurling: whirling
- I. v. 174 or thus, head shake; or this head-shake
- II. ii. 45 God, one: God and
- II. ii. 324 in form and moving: in form, in moving
- II. ii. 388 [delete] 'very'

¹ Cf. also "Duke" and "Duchess" in place of King and Queen in *The Murder of Gonzago*; and "First Centinel" for Francisco.

- II. ii. 448 abridgments come: abridgment comes
II. ii. 462 my lord?: my good lord
II. ii. 483 arms: arm
III. i. 117 you: thee
III. ii. 42 with us, sir: with us
III. ii. 213 loves: love
III. ii. 382 excellent: eloquent
IV. vii. 92 Lamond: Lamord
V. i. 245 it: its
V. ii. 358 O good Horatio: O God! Horatio

APPENDIX D

SUGGESTIONS FOR COLLATERAL READING

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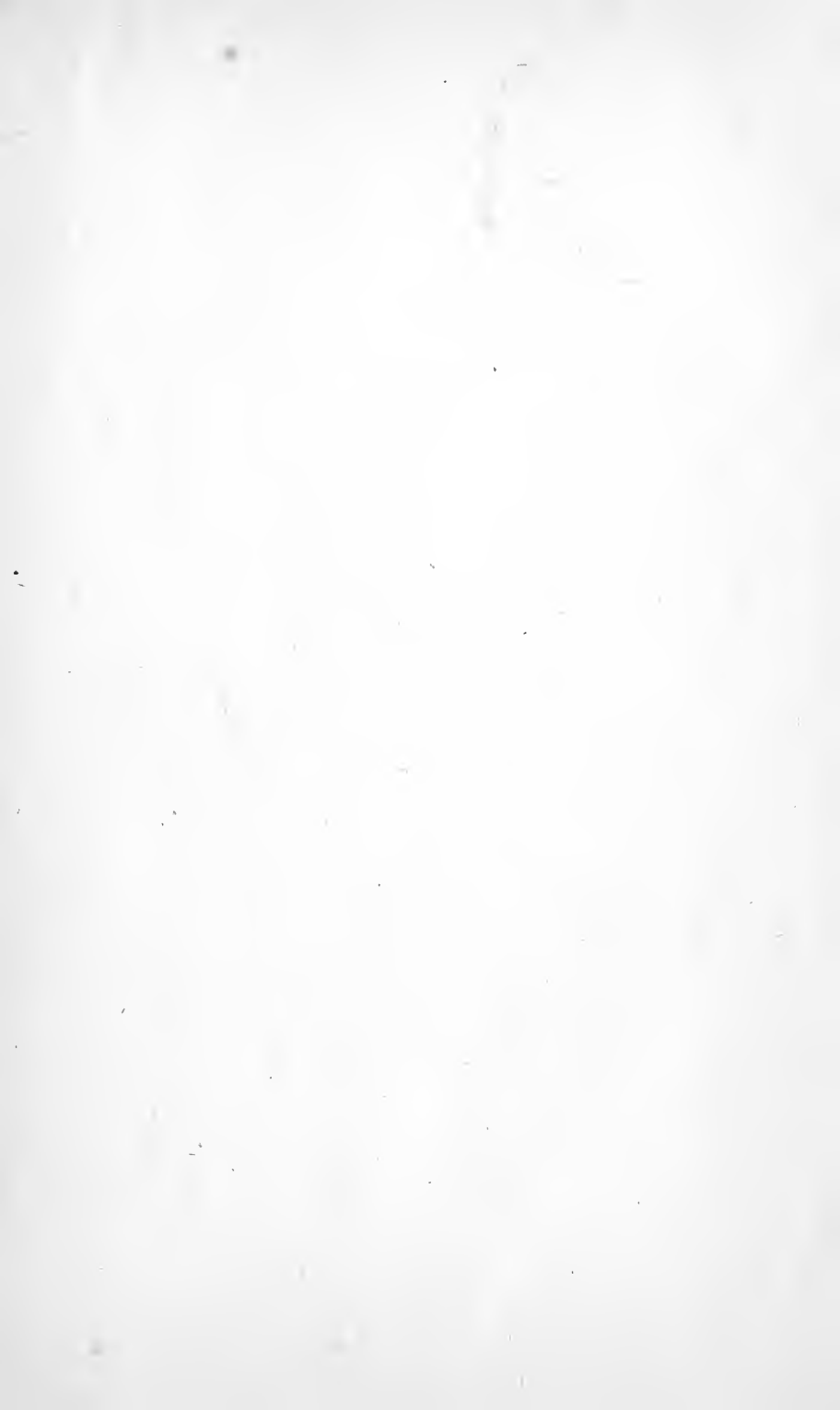
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